



LAKE MERRITT PARK

ASLA/NCC
Community Assistance Team 1988-89

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LAKE MERRITT PARK:

Recommendations for a Lake Merritt Park
Master Plan,

This is the official report of the 1988-89 Community Assistance Team (or "CAT") Project of the American Society of Landscape Architects, Northern California Chapter. *auth - no*

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

- 1.0 PROJECT DESCRIPTION
- 2.0 LAKE MERRITT "CAT" SLIDE PRESENTATION
- 3.0 INVENTORY AND ANALYSIS
- 4.0 RECORD OF PUBLIC WORKSHOPS AND COMMUNITY GROUP PRESENTATIONS
- 5.0 PLANNING RECOMMENDATIONS

APPENDICES

- 1. SAMPLE QUESTIONNAIRE
- 2. SUMMARY OF QUESTIONNAIRE RESULTS
- 3. BIBLIOGRAPHY
- 4. LETTERS OF SUPPORT



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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Lake Merritt is the East Bay's central urban open space and is widely symbolic of all the positive aspects of Oakland. Often called the "jewel of Oakland," Lake Merritt is, however, unequipped to fulfill its role as a major public park. In great part due to the fact that the Oakland community has never looked upon the Lake and its surrounding parklands as one, overall open space or as "Lake Merritt Park," the Lake has not been able to achieve its full potential as a recreational destination.

Surrounded on the south by important institutions such as the Oakland Museum, Kaiser Convention Center and Laney College, the Lake is cut off from them by existing traffic patterns. The greenbelt connection long ago proposed between Lake Merritt and the Estuary has never been realized. Painfully narrow park borders separating the Lake from city streets on several sides combine with insufficient parkland acreage to cause conflicts among joggers, bicyclists, and pedestrians. Lakeside Park contains several flourishing park institutions such as Children's Fairyland, yet they are compromised by competition for limited space.

In January, 1988 the Lake Merritt Community Assistance Team, a volunteer group of landscape architects, architects and city planners, sponsored by the Northern California Chapter of the American Society of Landscape Architects, formed to investigate ways to improve the effectiveness of Lake Merritt as Oakland's central public park. The purpose of the "CAT" Team was to catalyze an official Lake Merritt Park master planning process to be undertaken by the City of Oakland. This Lake Merritt Park master plan should address the many opportunities for enhancing, improving or restoring the environment of the Lake Merritt Study Area, which includes the Channel, Estuary Park, and all of the building frontages along the streets ringing the Lake.

The CAT Team began by identifying three major goals for Lake Merritt:

1. To encourage the public to perceive the study area as one overall unified open space, to be known as "Lake Merritt Park."
2. To recommend that the City of Oakland establish a "special planning district" for the Lake Merritt project area with special zoning restrictions, including limits on building heights. Establishment of such a planning district could help to qualify Lake Merritt Park for new sources of funding from both the East Bay Regional Parks and the State of California.

3. To recommend that the City of Oakland undertake a master planning process for a Lake Merritt Park Master Plan. This process would include:
 - a. review of the specific planning recommendations proposed by the CAT Team.
 - b. further review of neighborhood group responses to the opportunities and planning recommendations suggested by the CAT Team.
 - c. generation of a master plan with elements which can be directly translated into specific, realistic design and construction projects.

After listing a series of specific opportunities for improving Lake Merritt, the CAT Team prepared a forty minute slide presentation about the many issues involved. This slide presentation was shown to the public in a series of four workshops which took place in several Oakland neighborhoods in the spring of 1989. Since Lake Merritt is a draw for Oakland residents from all parts of the city (as well as visitors from other East Bay communities and San Francisco,) an attempt was made to schedule the workshops at neighborhood centers city-wide. The four workshops were attended by a racial and cultural cross-section of Oakland's diverse population. Unfortunately, a fifth workshop scheduled for the Brookfield Recreation Center in East Oakland was not attended, despite publicity by Oakland's Office of Parks and Recreation, which worked with the CAT Team to identify the locations and dates for the workshops.

Directed by a Steering Committee of volunteers, the CAT Team was assisted by an Advisory Committee of experienced landscape architects and experts in many fields, including public participation in the planning process, traffic planning, bicycle advocacy and hydrology. The Team interfaced with three City departments--Parks and Recreation, Planning, and Public Works--in addition to several key community advocacy groups, including Oakland Design Advocates, Oakland Heritage Alliance and the "Plaza for the Arts" Committee of Oakland's Strategic Plan for Cultural Development.

With the support of city staff, the CAT Team entered into a "Memorandum of Understanding" with the City and the Lake Merritt CAT Project was officially endorsed by the City Council. Under the umbrella of the Environmental Design Foundation of Northern California with its non-profit tax exempt organizational status, the CAT Team went on to propose

several specific planning recommendations generated both by the CAT Team itself and by the public in response to the slide presentation. Some of the key planning recommendations are as follows:

A. Proposals for Immediate Implementation:

1. Improve safety and security by adding site lighting and increasing police and ranger patrols.
2. Prepare a long-term master planting plan to replace mature and declining trees; provide a new automatic irrigation system and implement a park maintenance plan.
3. Plan and design intensely landscaped park gateways at the key intersections leading to the Lake to create the image of a central park precinct in downtown Oakland extending beyond the actual park area; "green" the medians on all approach streets.
4. Redesign and install new park signage to provide information about bikeways, park amenities and park activities.
5. Mitigate erosion on steep lakeside banks.

B. Proposals for early implementation following further planning studies and public input:

1. Plan a one-way bikeway loop system around the Lake.
2. Plan for a bikeway and pedestrian link between the Lake, Channel Park and Estuary Park.
3. Widen narrow park borders, either by modifying traffic/patterns, removing on-street parking or filling in limited areas around the lakeshore.
4. Improve the existing pedestrian trail system.
5. Integrate the Lake with surrounding parks by better signage, planting and special pedestrian street crossings.
6. Rebuild decaying bulkhead walls around the Lake.
7. Introduce marsh plants at points where the Lake edge is gradual and shallow.
8. Develop a master plan to redesign the wildlife refuge to provide improved bird habitat and an interpretive trail.

9. Eliminate the Rotary Science Center or reorganize its programs around the themes of the Pacific Flyway and Birds of Lake Merritt.
 10. Establish a zoning ordinance severely restricting building heights around the Lake except for allowance for taller buildings in the developing area near Grand and Harrison Streets.
 11. Modify traffic patterns near the Lakeview Branch Library to expand and connect the useable park spaces at this location.
 12. Create "magnet" parking lots at the corners of the Lake to discourage emphasis on on-street parking which restricts width of Lake borders.
 13. Install aerating jets behind the metal booms at the two arms of the Lake.
- C. Proposals for long-range implementation following in-depth feasibility, planning, marketing and fundraising studies:
1. Build a Lid Park over Twelfth Street as an extension of the Oakland Museum. This Lid Park, built over the expressway, can terrace down to the Lake and can function as the "Arts Plaza" currently envisioned to revitalize this district. Extended to join the Oakland Museum, Kaiser Convention Center, Alameda County Courthouse and Laney College, the Lid Park can become a "superblock" serving as a new civic center for Oakland.
 2. Conduct opinion polls and planning studies to determine the feasibility of providing a more active children's theme park at Children's Fairyland.

1.0 Project Description

1.1 BACKGROUND TO THE ASLA "CAT" PROGRAM

The Community Assistance Team (CAT) program is sponsored by the American Society of Landscape Architects (ASLA), the national organization representing the profession. The ASLA, founded in 1899, is a nonprofit organization which promotes planning and stewardship of the land. Membership is available to individuals who have completed an accredited curriculum in Landscape Architecture from a recognized college or university. The society currently has over 8500 members, and local chapters in all fifty states.

The preamble of the ASLA Code of Professional Conduct states that a goal of its membership is "dedication of improving the quality of life for all persons." The Landscape Architect is responsible for the preservation and protection of our natural resources and works toward understanding the interaction of the economic and social systems which affect these resources.

Implicit is the traditional role of the Landscape Architect as facilitator in resolving land-based issues, with concern for the design and management of cultural, scenic, natural, and historic resources.

In order to discuss issues and concerns that affect the society, an Annual Meeting was established beginning in 1960. A recent component of that Annual Meeting is a presentation of the Community Assistance Team (CAT) project which was completed over the course of the previous year. The general purpose of the CAT is to provide a means by which Landscape Architects can offer their professional skills to the public, by addressing the needs of important community landscapes or regions. Professionals and students provide resource assistance, site planning, renovation design and other professional services free of charge, leaving a legacy of service to the host city of the Annual Meeting. The benefits returned to the profession are heightened public awareness of the Landscape Architect's role in managing the environment.

The first National ASLA CAT project, the Eggleston corridor urban design study in Cincinnati, Ohio, was a major focus of the 1985 Cincinnati Annual Meeting. This project was sponsored by the City's Bicentennial Committee and was enthusiastically received by the community. Following presentation of the study's results, the Cincinnati Planning Commission recommended that it be

adopted as an Amendment to the Downtown Plan. As of this date the City Council has allocated 2.8 million dollars to improve the Eggleston Corridor area, based on the ASLA CAT plan.

The San Francisco CAT of 1986 was the second such project to be undertaken, and was presented at the November 1986 San Francisco Annual Meeting. As had been anticipated, this was the largest gathering ever of Landscape Architects, with over 4500 in attendance. With the success and acclaim of the Cincinnati effort in mind, the CAT Project Selection Committee was formed in October 1985. Seven members of the Northern California Chapter ASLA began to research possible projects. Eventually, the Presidio of San Francisco was selected as the subject of the 1986 CAT.

The importance of the Presidio CAT has been underscored by the Pentagon's recent decision to close the Presidio, much sooner than anyone had anticipated. The project helped pave the way for cooperation between the many diverse groups which have a stake in the future of the Presidio, including the Golden Gate National Recreation Area (GGNRA), City of San Francisco, local neighborhood groups and, until recently, the U.S. Army in planning for the Presidio's future.

The Lake Merritt CAT Project, officially launched in 1988, is one of the first projects in the CAT program to be undertaken by a local chapter of the ASLA. CAT Project guidelines drafted by the national ASLA organization have adopted the policy of encouraging local chapters, such as the Northern California Chapter, to undertake their own CAT projects. Some of these local projects begin as the result of a community approaching the local ASLA chapter to "assist" them with a planning or design problem important to the community. Others such as the Lake Merritt CAT Project are launched by ASLA members themselves, who approach the community with a planning or design concept which they deem worthy of community attention.

1.2 INTRODUCTION

Lake Merritt is Oakland's central open space amenity and is widely symbolic of all the positive aspects of Oakland's image. Sandwiched between downtown, the Hills and the flatland neighborhoods, the Lake literally and symbolically ties together all the disparate worlds of Oakland. Moreover, the Lake is tremendously popular as a recreational destination for people from all over Oakland and the East Bay. In fact, it is the only major open space in central Oakland.

Yet Lake Merritt is sadly unequipped to fulfill its de-facto role as a major public park. Surrounded on the south by important institutions such as the Oakland Museum, Kaiser Convention Center and Laney College, the Lake is cut off from them by existing traffic patterns. Moreover, the greenbelt connection long ago proposed between Lake Merritt and the Estuary has never been realized. Painfully narrow park borders separating the Lake from city streets on several sides combine with insufficient park land acreage to cause conflicts among joggers, bicyclists, pedestrians and people who wish to sit passively. Lakeside Park contains several flourishing park institutions such as Children's Fairyland and the Rotary Science Center, yet all of these institutions are compromised by competition for space in which to grow. In addition to all these physical constraints, the many small parks ringing the Lake have never been joined by a master plan into one single "Lake Merritt Park."

The goal of the Lake Merritt Community Assistance Team Project is to investigate ways to improve the effectiveness of Lake Merritt as a major central public park for Oakland. In a series of public workshops and presentations to key community organizations, the CAT Team identified problems with the current park plan and explored potential design options to improve the park's image, size, useability, appearance and connections to surrounding amenities. The end product of the study is a set of planning recommendations addressing many missed opportunities which have prevented "Lake Merritt Park" from realizing its full potential as a significant urban open space.

1.3 LAKE MERRITT "CAT" PROJECT STUDY AREA

One of the three primary goals for the Lake Merritt "CAT" Project is to encourage public perception of the Lake, the Channel, Estuary Park and the parks and roadways surrounding the Lake as one overall park open space. Consequently, the study area for the Lake Merritt "CAT" Project includes the Lake itself and the many parks surrounding the Lake, such as Lakeside Park and Snow Park; Channel Park; Estuary Park; and all the roads and building frontages surrounding the Lake and its parks.

1.4 STATEMENT OF PURPOSE

The purpose of the "Lake Merritt 'CAT' Project" is to catalyze a larger planning process which can lead to designed solutions to the many opportunities for enhancing, improving or restoring the environment of the Lake Merritt Study Area.

1.5 OVERALL GOALS OF LAKE MERRITT "CAT" PROJECT:

1. Encourage public perception of study area as one over-all unified open space to be known as "Lake Merritt Park".
2. Recommend that the City of Oakland create a special planning district for the Lake Merritt project area with special zoning restrictions including limits on building heights.
3. Recommend that the City of Oakland undertake a planning process either internally or with the assistance of private consultants to:
 - a. review the opportunities and analyze the feasibility of the potential design response options presented by the CAT team.
 - b. suggest other opportunities and possible design responses not identified by the CAT Team.
 - c. analyze the responses of the neighborhood groups to the potential design options identified by the CAT Team.
 - d. generate a master plan for the Lake Merritt study area, employing design options which can be translated into specific, realistic construction projects.

1.6 CAT PROJECT TEAM AND ORGANIZATION

The Lake Merritt CAT Project was undertaken by a Steering Committee composed of several architects, landscape architects and planners offering their volunteer services to generate the key products of the study, such as the questionnaire, inventory maps, slide show, and final report. In addition, the Steering Committee analyzed and discussed opportunities and design response options for improving and/or enhancing the Lake Merritt study area and generated the list of specific planning recommendations included in this report.

The Steering Committee was assisted by a Design/Technical Advisory Committee composed of several prominent landscape architects, urban designers and a group of specialists, including a traffic planner, bicycle advocate, public participation specialist, and a member of the Oakland Metropolitan Forum, an organization devoted to establishing linkages between City of Oakland planning goals and U.C. Berkeley studio and research projects.

The Design/Technical Advisory Committee met once as a whole to establish guidelines for the Steering Committee's work. Members of the Committee participated in a site tour, in a key planning meeting for the development of the slide presentation, and in a final workshop to review the Steering Committee's draft report and make recommendations for amending it. Perhaps more importantly, members of the Committee met individually with the Steering Committee to provide suggestions and assistance on those subjects with which they had particular expertise.

The City of Oakland Office of Parks and Recreation functioned as the lead city agency participating in the project. The five public workshops were organized by the Office of Parks and Recreation. Herbye White, Director of Parks and Recreation, set the priority of conducting workshops in as many of Oakland's districts as possible, so as to generate broad-based city-wide feedback to the project's specific proposals, emphasizing the Steering Committee's own assertion that Lake Merritt is a central park for all of Oakland.

Although Parks and Recreation worked most closely with the project, liaisons to the Department of City Planning and the Office of Public Works were established early-on. Presentations were made to Clyde Grimes, City Architect, and to Alvin James, Director of Planning. In addition, an interdepartmental City Advisory Committee was formally appointed. This committee was composed of Helaine

Kaplan-Prentice (Planning), Philip Sales (Public Works), and Carol Agnello (Parks and Recreation). Aileen Frankel, Assistant to the Director of Parks and Recreation, functioned as the primary contact with City Staff.

Brooks Kolb acted as Founder of the Lake Merritt CAT project and Chairman of the Steering Committee directing the project. In addition he functioned as liaison to the Arts Plaza Committee of the City's Cultural Arts Program. The Arts Plaza Committee is seeking to encourage development of a new South Lake Arts District and has similar goals to the Lake Merritt CAT Project for the south end of the Lake.

STEERING COMMITTEE MEMBERS

Brooks Kolb, Chairman and Founder, Lake Merritt CAT Project

Core Participants:

Karen McArdle, landscape architect

Cheryl Miller, landscape architect

Scott Stohler, landscape architect

Ben Tarcher, architect

Judy Irvin, architect and city planner

Barry Miller, city planner

Danielle Putnam, landscape architect

Assisting Participants:

Nancy Balderston, landscape architect

Ronald Saunders, landscape architect

Diane Ochi, landscape architect

David Thorne, landscape architect

Michelle Koo, landscape architect

George Durney, city planner

DESIGN/TECHNICAL ADVISORY COMMITTEE MEMBERS

Mai Arbegast, landscape architect and horticultural consultant

Reed Dillingham, landscape architect, Dillingham Associates

Jack Griffith, landscape architect, Arbegast Newton and Griffith

Daniel Iacofano, landscape architect and public participation specialist, Moore, Iacofano Goltsman

Richard Krebs, bicycle advocate, East Bay Bicycle Coalition

Jeff Loux, landscape architect and environmental planner
The Planning Collaborative, Inc.

Michael Painter, landscape architect, MPA Design

Chris Pattillo, landscape architect and chairperson,
Oakland Design Advocates

Victor Rubin, city planner and participant, Oakland Metropolitan Forum

Ken Ryan, traffic engineer

Peter Mangarella, hydraulic engineer, Woodward and Clyde

Elizabeth Bradley, hydraulic engineer, Philip Williams Associates

Cheryl Miller, landscape architect, Amphion Environmental, Inc.

5 Oct. 1988 -
 Feb. 1989

TRIAL PRESENTATIONS

Trial slide presentations were made to city staff; the Parks and Recreation Commission's, Lakeside Park Committee; and interested community organizations in preparation for public workshops phase; specific proposals were organized into 3 categories in order of proposed immediate, mid-range and long-range implementation

6 March - May 1989

PUBLIC WORKSHOPS

Five public workshops were planned and four were undertaken in neighborhoods throughout the City of Oakland

7 June - Dec. 1989

**FINAL REPORT AND
RECOMMENDATIONS WERE
PREPARED**

1.8 KEY PRODUCTS

Several key products generated by the Lake Merritt CAT Project can be viewed as signposts in the planning process described above:

1. A **QUESTIONNAIRE** was developed, designed and printed for use as a handout at the Festival at the Lake, June 3, 4 and 5, 1988. Results of the questionnaire are described in this report. The questionnaire can be re-used or used as a prototype for the revised questionnaire if the City of Oakland desires increased public outreach beyond the number of persons reached by the CAT Project. The questionnaire solicited public input as to perceptions of the Lake as it currently exists and suggestions for its improvement/enhancement.
2. **OPPORTUNITIES AND DESIGN RESPONSE OPTIONS** were identified and became the basic planning and/or design concepts presented in the slide presentation and tested in the public workshops.
3. **INVENTORY MAPS** were generated to describe existing conditions at the study area. While broad-brush in nature, these inventory maps can become a new data source at the disposal of the City of Oakland for undertaking a master planning process for Lake Merritt.
4. An **OPPORTUNITIES AND DESIGN OPTIONS MAP** was generated to summarize the many possible alternative planning proposals suggested for the Lake's future. This map constitutes a concept diagram intended as a blueprint for further refinement in an official master planning process.
5. A **SLIDE PRESENTATION** summarizing existing conditions, identifying opportunities for improvement/enhancement, and proposing design response options to these opportunities was established for use in the public workshops. This slide presentation is at the disposal of the City of Oakland for additional outreach to community and neighborhood groups. A printed graphic version of the slide presentation, with related text, is included in this report. The slide presentation concludes with the lists of specific planning proposals (See Item 6, below).

6. **SPECIFIC PLANNING PROPOSALS** were listed in three categories: proposals for immediate implementation; proposals for early implementation following further planning studies; and proposals for long-range implementation following in-depth feasibility studies.

These proposals, together with some specific design options, have been revised in response to feedback at the public workshops and are included in this report.

7. **A FINAL REPORT** was written to document the study's goals, objectives, background data and research, as well as to present the specific planning proposals.
8. **PUBLIC WORKSHOP** minutes were taken at each public workshop to give the City of Oakland a permanent record of public input and feedback to the Lake Merritt CAT Project. Minutes of presentations to key community organizations are also included in this report.

1.9 CAT PROJECT CHRONOLOGY

July 1987	Commence "networking" about project.
November 24, 1987	Proposed project to NCC/ASLA.
December 1, 1987	Presentation to Cultural Services Committee of City Council; committee recommends approval by Council.
December 16, 1987	Presentation to Parks and Recreation Commission; commission recommends approval by City Council.
January 26, 1988	Steering Committee convenes.
February 5, 1988	NCC/ASLA provides written endorsement.
February 6, 1988	Site Tour conducted with Design/Technical Committee and Philip Sales of City Department of Architectural Services.
March 15, 1988	Draft Memorandum of Understanding with City received by Steering Committee.
March 15, 1988	City Council votes to endorse project as part of the Consent Calendar.
March 22, 1988	Letters of endorsement received from San Francisco City Planning Department and ASLA's 1986 Presidio CAT Project director.
April 13, 1988	Presentation of CAT Project concept to Oakland Design Advocates (ODA).
April 27, 1988	Letter of endorsement received from ASLA National President, Cheryl Barton.
May 11, 1988	Environmental Design Foundation votes to endorse and sponsor project as tax-exempt umbrella organization.
May 18, 1988	Design/Technical Committee convenes to discuss project and make recommendations for its goals, process and products.

June 3, 4, 5 1988	Manned booth at the Festival at the Lake: obtained 200 names and addresses of people concerned with improving Lake Merritt; handed out questionnaire and received approximately 30 responses.
July, 1988	Brooks Kolb joined planning subcommittee of the "Plaza for the Arts" Committee to coordinate CAT Project goals and activities with those of City's Cultural Arts Program and its Plaza Committee.
September 23, 1988	Meeting with Daniel Iacofano, member of the Design/Technical Committee and Partner, Moore Iacofano Goltsman, to discuss general methodology for public participation process for project.
September 24, 1988	Steering Committee Charrette at Ben Tarcher's office to produce inventory maps.
September 26, 1988	Design/Technical Committee convenes to discuss progress of slide presentation; Aileen Frankel and Carol Agnello, staff members of Office of Parks and Recreation attended.
October 8, 1988	Steering Committee Second Charrette at Ben Tarcher's office to produce inventory maps.
October 20, 1988	In-progress slide presentation to Oakland Heritage Alliance.
December 2, 1988	Received \$1000 tax-deductible contribution from Kaiser-Permanente.
December 9, 1988	Official trial slide presentation to Herbye White, Clyde Grimes and Office of Parks and Recreation staff.
December 14, 1988	Official slide presentation to Oakland Design Advocates. Letter of endorsement promised by ODA.
December 16, 1988	Official slide presentation to Alvin James and Helaine-Kaplan-Prentice of City Planning Department.

January 5, 1989	Meeting with Herbye White to discuss proposed method of community outreach and public presentation. Six public meetings projected.
January 11, 1989	Progress report to Parks and Recreation Commission.
February 1, 1989	Presentation to Lakeside Park Committee of Oakland Parks Commission.
February 24, 1989	Presentation to State Representative Elihu Harris, Oakland Mayoral Candidate. Mr. Harris informally expressed his support for the CAT Project goals.
March 13, 1989	Presentation to Executive Committee, NCC/ASLA.
March 14, 1989	Received letter of support from ODA.
March 14, 1989	Press release for public workshop sent out by wire to 200 East Bay newspapers and newsletters.
March 24, 1989	Meeting with Daniel Iacofano regarding specific public workshop facilitation procedures.
March 29, 1989	First of Five Public Workshops: De Fremery Recreation Center.
April 5, 1989	Second of Five Public Workshops: Montclair Recreation Center.
April 12, 1989	Presentation to Environmental Design Foundation.
April 22, 1989	Presentation prepared for Brookfield Recreation Center (Third of Five Public Workshops): No persons attended. Hand distributed fliers for remaining two workshops in shops and institutions around the Lake.
April 27, 1989	Presentation to Lake Merritt Breakfast Club. Lake Committee of LBMC votes to endorse Project Lake Committee indicates interest in financing completion of project, including Final Report.

May 13, 1989	Fourth of Five Public Workshops: Manzanita Recreation Center.
May 21, 1989	Fifth of Five Public Workshops: Garden Center, Lakeside Park.
May 25, 1989	Presentation to Arts Plaza Committee of City of Oakland Cultural Arts Program
June 6, 1989	Presentation of portion of slideshow relating to bike/pedestrian network. Complete presentation to Cultural Services Committee of Oakland City Council scheduled for October 1.
June 9, 1989	Meeting with Key Ryan concerning potential traffic alterations.
August 2, 1989	Meeting with Design/Technical Advisory Committee and Key City Staff persons to review and discuss draft report recommendations.

2.0 Slide Presentation

2.1 OPPORTUNITIES AND DESIGN RESPONSE OPTIONS

The "CAT" Project Team identified twelve distinct opportunity areas for improvement and/or enhancement of the Lake Merritt study area. In preparation for making specific proposals for a Lake Merritt Concept Plan, the Team then generated a series of potential design response options to each of the twelve basic opportunities. These potential design response options constitute a series of alternative design resolutions to each opportunity: in some cases, two potential design responses are compatible with each other; in other cases a choice must be made between two or more opposing approaches.

The list of opportunities and design response options became the basis for the specific preliminary planning proposals which were included in the slide presentation and tested at the public workshops.

OPPORTUNITY	POTENTIAL DESIGN RESPONSE OPTIONS
1. OPPORTUNITY TO CREATE A BIKE PATH SYSTEM	<ul style="list-style-type: none">* bike trail through park* permanent bike lane in street* bike lane in street (weekends only)* combination
2. OPPORTUNITY TO CREATE A TRAIL SYSTEM	<ul style="list-style-type: none">* improve/repair existing trails* add new trails and signage to differentiate walking and jogging trails* restore/improve bulkhead walls
3. OPPORTUNITY TO EXTEND PARK AREAS AND EXPAND AND IMPROVE PARK EDGES	<ul style="list-style-type: none">* urban promenades at narrowest points* selective removal of on-street parking* selective fill areas in lake itself* selective removal of lanes or streets* convert selected streets from 2-way to 1-way

OPPORTUNITY

4. OPPORTUNITY TO
INTEGRATE LAKE PARK
SYSTEM WITH
SURROUNDING AMENITIES
AND PROPOSED
SOUTH LAKE CULTURAL
ARTS DISTRICT

5. OPPORTUNITY TO IMPROVE
WATER QUALITY, WATER LEVEL
AND ACCESS TO WATER

POTENTIAL DESIGN RESPONSE OPTIONS

- * remove parking lot or convert to turf block
- * restore bulkhead walls where necessary or desirable; convert canted bulkhead walls to vertical
- * improved site signage
- * expanded trail and bikeway system
- * "lid" park over 12th Street
- * on-grade bike/pedestrian crossing to link estuary with Channel Park
- * above grade bike/pedestrian crossing to link estuary with Channel Park
- * ferry service between Snow Park and Lakeside Park
- * pedestrian bridge between Snow Park and Lakeside Park
- * expanded public transit
- * improve beaches by importing sand
- * study feasibility of raising water level on regular basis without impeding circulation and aeration (pump up to higher average tidal level and flush regularly)
- * study methods for more effective dredging and trash collection at lake edges

OPPORTUNITY

6. OPPORTUNITY TO CREATE A SAFER ENVIRONMENT

7. OPPORTUNITY TO EXPAND TYPES AND VARIETY OF RECREATION

8. OPPORTUNITY TO EXPAND AND REINFORCE BIRD AND WILDLIFE REFUGE HABITATS/ NATURAL SCIENCE CENTER

POTENTIAL DESIGN RESPONSE OPTIONS

- * create signage and graphics to facilitate public interpretation of this unique resource: an estuarine "lake"
- * remove, lower or conceal existing storm drain and other pipes which "daylight" above water level

- * additional police and park ranger patrols
- * neighborhood watch program
- * additional park lighting
- * expanded evening programs and activities

- * "soft" jogging trail
- * bikeway
- * fishing programs coordinated with water quality improvement program
- * renovate/redesign fishing piers
- * expanded boating programs/expanded boathouse
- * picnicking/barbecue areas
- * expanding public awareness of existing programs
- * restored beach

- * reinforce and redesign current image as an urban bird feeding area/injured bird sanctuary (unlimited human access)
- * reclaim area for a "wild" bird refuge with limited human access

OPPORTUNITY

POTENTIAL DESIGN RESPONSE OPTIONS

9. OPPORTUNITY TO IMPROVE CHILDREN'S FAIRYLAND AS A MODERN ACTIVE THEME PARK

- * reorganize natural science center around theme of bird migratory routes featuring stopover in the Bay Area
- * reorganize natural science center around them of urban wildlife --species and habitats
- * integrate science center programs with Oakland Museum's California Ecology Exhibit
- * eliminate science center altogether to expand area for bird habitat

10. OPPORTUNITY TO REGENERATE VEGETATION

- * create a design competition for updating Children's Fairyland
- * retain Children's Fairyland exactly as it is
- * undertake a re-vegetation long-range planting plan
- * raise funds for implementation of planting plan
- * create a neighborhood planting program similar to S.F. Friends of the Urban Forest
- * plan for erosion-control planting on steep banks

OPPORTUNITY

11. OPPORTUNITY TO REINFORCE DISTINCT PARK CHARACTER AND IMPROVE PARK IMAGE

POTENTIAL DESIGN RESPONSE OPTIONS

- * establish unified design guidelines for park buildings and structures
- * design a "signature" style for park site furnishings such as benches, lights, trash receptacles and drinking fountains
- * create park "gateways" highly maintained miniparks announcing entry to park area
- * landscape and beautify existing road medians
- * create distinctive park signage system to announce programs and activities and to provide general information
- * open up vistas and views currently blocked
- * acquire new park areas
- * add lighting to encourage night-time use of park facilities
- * all of the above combined will create an expanded Central Oakland Park Precinct Theme

12. OPPORTUNITY FOR HISTORIC PRESERVATION

- * preserve and protect existing historic buildings and landmarks
- * restore decaying or disappeared landmarks as needed

2.2 SLIDE PRESENTATION

The following text and images were presented in a slide talk at the four public workshops and at several presentations to key interested groups:

The overall goals of the Lake Merritt CAT Project are threefold:

1. to encourage public participation of the Lake, Channel and Estuary as one overall open space, to be called Lake Merritt Park.
2. to create a Special Planning District for this Lake Merritt Park study area, including the streets and building frontages around the Lake as well as the Lake, Channel and surrounding parks. Limitations on building heights would be a primary objective of the Special Planning District.
3. to recommend that the City of Oakland generate a Master Plan for the Lake Merritt Park Special Planning District.

The purpose of the Lake Merritt "CAT" Project is to "catalyze" a planning process for the Lake Merritt Park Master Plan.

The history of Lake Merritt indicates that a series of small parks were established around the Lake; the City of Oakland missed the opportunity to acquire more extensive parklands in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. Consequently, the concept of a single park ringing the Lake was never fully implemented.

Reinforcing the fragmentation of the parklands, political boundaries have split the Lake, which is divided among three city council districts and two federal community block grant districts.

We now begin a walk around the Lake Merritt Park study area, starting at the Grand Lake Theater, at Grand and Lake Park Avenues. A small parklet at this intersection announces the approach to a central Oakland park district. The unique fountain, with its scalloped edges and bottom of river-washed rocks, should be restored with a jet.

Interstate 580 separates the parklet at Grand and Lake Park from a large playing field which provides a welcoming site as one exits I-580, eastbound. This highly popular playing field, which borders the Lake, needs a stronger pedestrian/bike linkage with the small parklet containing the fountain. A symbolic connection is already expressed by the first class mural painted on a wall under I-580. Its theme, the arts and culture of Oakland, could be extended to the entire Lake Merritt Park.

Passing the Lake View Branch of the Oakland Public Library, we arrive at the "El Embarcadero" pergola, perhaps the most elegant architectural landmark at the Lake. Yet the pergola is set in an extremely narrow park border, split off from the library and the playing field by two one-way streets. We believe that traffic patterns should be studied with a view to eliminating at least one of these connections (See "Traffic Modifications.")

Emerging on the opposite side of the pergola, and following the Lakeshore Drive lake edge trail, we encounter the many typical problems at the Lake: narrow park borders subject to conflicts between pedestrians and bicyclists; decaying bulkhead walls; trash buildup in the Lake; poor water quality.

Parking has been restricted on weekend afternoons which affords a temporary bike lane along Lakeshore Drive. The existing narrow park border has been diagrammed, as indicated.

If parking were removed on a permanent basis, a permanent bike lane could be established or the parking lane could be reclaimed as a widened sidewalk. Yet more far-reaching solutions to the problem of the narrow park borders are possible, as indicated by the "Traffic and Transportation Patterns" map.

South of Eighteenth Street, at least one traffic lane could be entirely removed and incorporated into an expanded park edge. Furthermore, the lake edges, now canted at 45 degrees, could be rebuilt vertically, thereby gaining additional park space. More radical traffic changes could be considered for Lakeshore Drive (see "Traffic Modifications" discussion.)

At the same time, there is an opportunity to regenerate vegetation at the Lake borders. Many mature trees bordering the lake are in decline. Moreover, our vegetation map indicates that tree cover is thinnest at the places where the lake borders are narrowest. This problem will soon be exacerbated by the placement of new storm and sanitary sewer lines which will eliminate the mature trees indicated by the "X" symbols on the right-hand image.

A related opportunity is that of integrating the Lake park borders with the surrounding small parklets on the eastside of Lakeshore Drive, including the "Cleveland Cascade" stairway park shown here.

Pine Knoll (left) represents a successful example of the park's greenery "jumping" the street; its graceful slopes overlooking the Lake give a sense of a wider, more generous park. Yet several hundred feet to the south (at Eighteenth Street), the Athol Plaza tennis courts are not easily perceived as belonging to the lake park system. Improved signage, a pedestrian crosswalk paved in a special, contrasting unit paver, and extensive new planting would do much to improve the perception of the parkland jumping the road in this location.

At the Eighteenth Street junction with Lakeshore Drive, we find a very awkward example of crowding presented by the concrete "boat landing" structure which extends out into the Lake. Pedestrians, bicyclists, joggers and others are forced to slow down to squeeze around this obstacle.

Looking back from the boat landing to Eighteenth Street, the landing appears to be set down in a sea of traffic--it seems not to exist in a park setting at all.

One controversial method to alleviate this problem would be to establish a new lake bulkhead wall thirty or forty feet further out into the Lake, and fill behind it to create a wider park border of grass and trees. The image on the left indicates the existing condition; that on the right is an environmental simulation slide revealing how the lake edge might look if the boat landing was literally pushed out into the Lake and surrounded by fill. The gently curving line of the little cove at this location could be retained, but at a point farther out in the Lake. The option to employ a minor amount of fill at selected points around the Lake was controversial even within the CAT Team; see "Landfill in Selected Portions of the Lake: Pros and Cons".

We now arrive at Twelfth Street, the south border of the Lake, currently a hard concrete edge with no park amenity between the roadway and the Lake. The tidal culverts from the Channel allow bay tides into the lake at Twelfth Street (left image).

A visionary solution to the total lack of parkland at Twelfth Street would be the creation of a "Twelfth Street Lid Park," as indicated on the map graphic (left). The right-side image is a view of the Washington State Convention Center in Seattle, which was built directly over the Seattle Freeway as Phase 2 of the mid-1970's Freeway Park, a highly successful downtown park designed by Lawrence Halprin and built on a lid over the freeway.

Contrasting views of the Kaiser Convention Center and Washington State Convention Center as entered from Freeway Park indicate that a similar solution, if employed at Lake Merritt, could link Kaiser Convention Center with the Lake and permit a new entrance to Kaiser from a new Twelfth Street Lid Park.

This view from the Oakland Museum to the Lake (left) is one of the most attractive of all the lake views, and indicates that the Twelfth Street Lid Park could be conceived as an extension of the Oakland Museum, built as a series of similar sculpture terraces cascading down toward the Lake. Such a lid park, joining the Oakland Museum, Kaiser Convention Center and Alameda County Courthouse with the Lake, could provide the "Arts Plaza" cultural arts center which is a primary goal of the City's "Strategic Plan for Cultural Development." The view of Freeway Park, Seattle (right) demonstrates how natural a park built over a structure, over a freeway, can appear. The City of Seattle has only recently started removing trees because of their weight; this will provide welcome sunlight in a park that has become all too shady.

As demonstrated by this poorly lit, isolated underpass below Twelfth Street, there is an opportunity to create a safer environment at the Lake.

The "Crime" map, researched in interviews with the Oakland Police, indicates that traditional high-crime areas are associated with Bellevue Drive, the parking lot at the Adams Point boathouse, Lakeshore Drive, and the pedestrian underpasses. Yet the underpass linking the Lake with the Kaiser Convention Center is quite attractive viewed from Kaiser's parking lot and permits bicyclists and pedestrians to progress from the Lake to the Channel Park.

This view of Peralta Park, a small park squeezed between the Lake, Kaiser Convention Center, and Channel Park, shows the north end of the channel--the culverts which allow tidewaters in the Lake are seen in the upper part of the image. Peralta Park provides a pedestrian and bicycle connection between the Lake and the Channel, and there is an opportunity to upgrade this connection into a true bike system.

Channel Park, running alongside Laney College, is quite attractive and contains a sculpture garden designed by Garrett Eckbo, but it is very underused. This is partly due to the lack of a coherent bikeway/path system joining the Lake and Channel. The map of the existing bikeway/path system indicates how chaotic and incomplete it is. The only road striped with a bike lane is Bellevue Drive east of Perkins Street and there are no marked bikeways through the park itself.

Bicyclists and pedestrians can continue to the Seventh Street Pumping Station and under Seventh Street.

South of Seventh Street, Channel Park ends under Interstate 880.

The left-hand image, looking south under I-880, shows that the last piece of land separating Estuary Park from Channel Park is currently in industrial use, with two sets of railroad tracks crossing it. The unattainable Estuary Park is shown on the right.

The parcel of land labeled "Channel Park Extension" is the current barrier between Channel and Estuary Parks. An on-grade pedestrian/bicycle connection across the railroad tracks is proposed by the CAT Team. Currently, pedestrian/bike access to Estuary Park is achieved by this narrow pathway between two chainlink fences at the Laney College Ceramics Studio, next to I-880. The path leads to Estuary Park by way of Fourth and Oak Streets.

From Estuary Park (left), one can continue along a waterfront trail to Jack London Square (right). If Broadway is seen as providing a pedestrian link to the heart of downtown, then a pedestrian/bike connection across the railroad tracks between Channel and Estuary Parks could result in a pedestrian link between downtown, the waterfront, the Channel and the Lake. An alternative street, parallel to Broadway, such as Jackson or Alice, could be provided with a bike lane to achieve a similar bicycle link.

These two images of Greenlake Park in Seattle, a lake of almost exactly the same size as Lake Merritt, show how another city handled similar conflicts between pedestrians and bicyclists. At Greenlake, "wheels" were supposed to be restricted to one side of the white line; "feet" to the other. As the image (right) indicates, this proved impossible to enforce. Still, the soft passing path for joggers is more successfully planned for than at Lake Merritt.

Returning to the Seventh Street Pump Station (left), it can be seen that there is an opportunity to improve water quality, water level and access to the water at Lake Merritt. The Seventh Street Pump Station is where water level is controlled by means of pumps and tide gates. Normally, the tides are allowed to set the water level at the Lake. In winter, when the Alameda County Flood Control Agency anticipates a large storm, the lake water level is pumped down and the tide gates are closed against the next incoming tide. In this way, freshwater inflow into the lake can be contained without flooding the banks. Additionally, the ACFA pumps the lake level up several times per year to provide greater water depth for several special boating events.

Water levels are indicated by the "measuring sticks" located adjacent to the tidal culverts at Twelfth Street.

The Lake is much more attractive with a higher water level (right) than with lower water level (left) which exposes a storm drain inlet at the south end of the Lake near the Camron-Stanford House. The CAT Team has suggested that the pumps be run regularly to pump the water level up once per tidal cycle, allowing for a higher average water level, but this may not be feasible. Water quality is achieved by a combination of water depth (which inhibits algae growth by restricting light penetration to the bottom) and aeration (high dissolved oxygen counts) achieved by constant water circulation. In this view of the south end of the Lake (left), shallow water depths and poor circulation have led to a crop of algae. Note that although the Lake was recently dredged, dredging equipment cannot operate on the Lake edges, where it can be damaged by the bulkhead walls and can in turn damage the walls. An ornamental jet is proposed for this location at the south end of the Lake. The jet by itself would be insufficient to provide enough circulation to permit trapping the high tide and closing the tide gates to contain this higher water level. Nevertheless, the jet could provide a symbolic focus to the cultural arts plaza proposed as a Twelfth Street Lid Park.

Lake Merritt is actually not a lake at all, but a tidal estuary (right). Its original borders as shown enclosed a large brackish to salt marsh, entered by four creeks. The shoreline of Seattle's Greenlake (left), demonstrates how attractive aquatic plants have solved the problem of trash and poor water quality at the lake edge. Such a solution for Lake Merritt is dependent upon finding the appropriate marsh vegetation that can flourish in changing levels of salinity and water depth. Well worth studying, this solution could be hampered by litter build-up in the marsh plants, which could prove difficult to remove regularly.

At the northwest corner or Glen Echo arm of the Lake, higher water levels are significantly more attractive. At lower water levels, the bottom is exposed (left). Nearly four feet below the paved walkway surface, the exposed bottom presents a potential hazard to fall onto.

Returning to the southwest corner of the Lake and proceeding up Lakeside Drive, we encounter the Camron-Stanford House, a magnificent historical building which underscores the importance of historic preservation at the Lake (left). Not far from the Camron-Stanford House is the old Lakeside Drive Boathouse, the first boathouse on the Lake, which currently houses the offices of Oakland's Office of Parks and Recreation. There is an opportunity to restore this building to its expanded use as a boathouse.

Farther up Lakeside Drive at a scenic bend in the road is one of the most picturesque lake views. The Lake Point Tower development intended for this location (left) is currently stalled. Unfortunately, the City was unable to obtain this parcel for parkland before its development value went up too high. Assuming the City does not have the resources to acquire this property for parkland, any redesigned development of the parcel should not be granted a building permit without providing a landscaped buffer along Lakeside Drive. This buffer, permitting the park greenery to jump the road, would preserve the attractive view of the Lakeside Park bandstand.

Adjacent to this bend in Lakeside Drive (at Nineteenth Street) is an example of an especially narrow park border. It should be obvious by now that the CAT Team has identified a primary goal of extending and improving narrow park borders and edges.

The park border along Harrison Street at the northwest corner of the Lake is especially bleak.

Our map of the park border widths (right) indicates that in many places the park border is only thirty feet wide or less, as shown by the darkest tone in the image.

Methods to improve the narrow park border along Harrison Street include striping Harrison Street to provide a bike land (left), filling eight to ten feet out into the Lake to create a wider path (right), or cantilevering a wider path out into the Lake. (see Landfill in Lake: Pros and Cons discussion).

Our map of building heights around the Lake reveals that the tallest buildings, which cast the longest shadows, exist at this Harrison Street lake frontage.

Currently, city zoning restricts building height and bulk only by means of "floor area ratio." The larger the parcel one owns, the higher and larger one can build.

The CAT Team recommends that zoning be amended to significantly restrict building heights all around the Lake, with the exception of the Harrison Street area. This will maintain the status quo of relatively low residential development ringing the north and east shores of the lake, with higher density development occurring on the west or downtown shore (left). Height restrictions will prevent the "Manhattanization" of Lake Merritt, as depicted in this image of New York's Central Park (right).

The Glen Echo arm of the Lake is a placid sheet of water (left) which could be crossed by a pedestrian bridge, built to allow canoes and rowboats through (right). A bridge across this arm of the Lake would allow downtown workers to cross over into Lakeside Park for lunch. The idea is offered as a suggestion for public debate. The bridge could be built to a much more sleek, "high-tech" design than the example shown here.

Erosion of the banks on the east (or Lakeside Park) side of the Glen Echo arm is a significant problem, created in part by the removal of much underbrush by parks maintenance personnel to control a problem of growing rat populations. Many oak trees have increasingly exposed roots and the erosion should be halted by carefully selected plantings which will not encourage a return of the rodents.

We now arrive at Lakeside Park, the largest contiguous park at Lake Merritt and the park many people perceive as Lake Merritt Park. Containing approximately 60 acres, Lakeside Park contains a Garden Center, Children's Fairyland, Rotary Science Center, wildlife refuge, boathouse, snack bar and restaurant, as well as passive recreation parkland.

There is an opportunity to preserve as well as create park character in Lakeside Park. Existing park character is exemplified by this view of the bandstand.

The entrance to Lakeside Park off of Grand Avenue (left) does not give the impression that one is entering the central urban park of the East Bay--special additional planting, parks maintenance and signage would go far toward making more of a statement. The Lawn Bowling Club building (right) sets an architectural style in the park which could be utilized to set a design theme for park furnishings, such as benches, light fixtures, etc.

An opportunity to preserve historic built elements in the park is exemplified by this view of the fountain near to the back side of the Lawn Bowling Club. Historic structures and their settings should be preserved, along with light fixtures, street furnishings, and other character-rich amenities.

Maps produced by the CAT Team indicate the large number of landmarks and cultural resources ringing the Lake and in Lakeside Park proper.

Street furnishings in Lakeside Park vary from some of high character, easily identifiable with Lakeside Park (lamp-post, left), while others are lacking in character and could be from any park (benches and cardboard trash receptacle, right). There is an opportunity to create design guidelines for the street furnishings at Lake Merritt Park, using a "signature style" which will be associated only with Lake Merritt. This will help make Lake Merritt a unique park with its own inimitable "image".

The beaches at Lakeside Park are badly in need of new sand being brought in, as they are currently unappealing and appear eroded (left). Bulkhead walls are decaying and are badly in need of replacement (right).

The parking lot adjacent to the Adams Point Sailboat House is located on some of the most valuable waterfront parklands (left). If it cannot be removed, certainly at least half of the parking spaces could be paved with a turf paving material. These spaces, rarely used would appear like a lawn, as exemplified by this view from Greenlake in Seattle (right). The parking lot is rarely full and the fewer spaces that are in regular use the more successful the turf pavers would be.

There is an opportunity to improve Children's Fairyland as a modern active theme park. Children's Fairyland could retain its storybook themes while encouraging more participatory or active children's exhibits (See Children's Fairyland discussion).

Perhaps more important is the opportunity to restore bird habitat at the Wildlife Refuge. Currently, the refuge has the appearance of a small urban zoo (left). Habitat restoration with human access limited to interpretive trails and viewpoints should be the primary goal for America's first wildlife refuge. The Rotary Science Center building should either be removed or its programs should be reorganized around the themes of "wildlife at Lake Merritt" and "the Pacific Flyway".

Ducks at Lake Merritt are fed at a small freshwater pond, separate from the lake (left). Ducks at Seattle's Greenlake are fed at the lake edge, which is a much more direct environmental experience.

The bird islands at Lake Merritt need revegetation and habitat restoration (left). Bird islands at Greenlake appear more natural (right).

Water recreation on Lake Merritt has maintained a peaceful coexistence with the wildlife refuge for decades (right). Boating activities are launched from the Adams Point Sailboat House (left).

There is an opportunity to expand the types and variety of recreation at Lake Merritt which are already diverse. More important is the opportunity to improve public awareness of the existing recreational opportunities.

Children's play coexists with informal football and softball in the playfields near I-580.

Picnicking is popular at the Lake (left) but a restaurant also serves Lakeside Park (right).

An extensive children's play area near Bellevue Drive could be upgraded (left). A map (right) of all the recreational activities available at the Lake indicates how extensive and varied they are (right). But how aware is the public of the number and variety of recreational opportunities available?

The Festival at the Lake has become an annual tradition, held at the Lake in early June of every year. Highly successful and innovative, the Festival strains the capacity of Lakeside Park to support such intensive recreational use. On June 3, 4, and 5, 1988 the Lake Merritt CAT Project set up its own booth at the Festival. The CAT Team gathered nearly 200 names and addresses of persons interested in improving the Lake and its environment. In addition, we handed out questionnaires about people's goals and agendas for the Lake and received nearly 30 replies.

The existing walking trail system at Lake Merritt needs to be upgraded and there is an opportunity to create a true trail system out of the existing haphazard collection of paths and walks.

A visual analysis of the Lake and the many views to and from the Lake indicate both existing views which should be preserved and potential views currently blocked by obstacles (right). Further planning studies need to determine which of these potential views could be opened up without removing buildings, mature trees, etc.

Views down the downtown streets which border on the Lake reveal that the existing park amenity extends past the park itself to the visual evidence of parkland and water that one sees looking down these streets toward the Lake. Increased park maintenance and intensive planting of grass and trees at these points can help visually to bring the park into the downtown neighborhoods, joining the park to the town. There is an opportunity to integrate the Lake park system with surrounding amenities, such as downtown itself. The concept of a "park precinct," extending past the actual park and into downtown and neighborhood streets will do much to link a new Lake Merritt Park with the City.

The concept of a "park precinct" extending to surrounding streets and reaching in toward the heart of downtown Oakland can be facilitated by a program of planting the existing roadway medians on the streets leading toward the Lake. A "green" median already exists in this view of 27th Street (left) but is missing from Harrison Street north of Grand (right).

These streets, planted with trees and flowers and bestowed with special light fixtures will provide "park gateways," announcing to the public of drivers and pedestrians that they are entering the park precinct.

Existing park signage is large but difficult to identify quickly with Lake Merritt Park (left). Its brown color blends in with the background and since it is used throughout the Oakland parks it does not help to create a special identity for the Lake Merritt Park. An example of the Seattle Parks Department sign (right) shows how bright colors and attractive lettering can provide a readily identifiable image for a park or park system.

The many proposals generated by the CAT Team point to a concept which could be dubbed an "economics of amenity." There is a chicken-and-the egg problem concerning how park improvements are related to investment in Oakland. Namely, investments in the City help to make the park improvements proposed by the CAT Team possible, yet at the same time, park improvements to enhance the image of Lake Merritt can encourage development in downtown Oakland. The contention of the CAT Team is that park improvements should be made soon to encourage development in downtown Oakland; at the same time, this development should help to pay for further, more ambitious park improvements.

There are several opportunities to generate revenue for the improvements proposed by the CAT Team:

1. Issue new permanent permit concessions in Lakeside Park.
2. Generate increased ticket sales following new investments in Children's Fairyland. (This option is unpopular with the public; see Children's Fairyland discussion).
3. Plan for limited retail development as part of a Twelfth Street Lid Park.
4. Set parking fees payable to the Office of Parks and Recreation in existing and new parking lots and garages.
5. (Most importantly) require developer contributions to park amenities in return for granting development and building permits. This concept, already exemplified by the Lake Merritt Towers Development at Grand and Harrison, where improvements to the Grand Avenue and Harrison Street medians and roadway borders were required, is based on the principle that in return for introducing a denser population of potential Lake Merritt Park users, developers should pay to improve the park to support the new population.

The planning recommendations of the CAT Team are divided into three categories: Proposals for Immediate Implementation; Proposals for Early

Implementation following further Planning Studies; and Proposals for Long-Range Implementation following in-depth feasibility, planning, marketing and design studies.

A. PROPOSALS FOR IMMEDIATE IMPLEMENTATION:

- * Improved safety and security.
- * Long-term planting and maintenance master plan
- * Improve park signage.
- * Improve park maintenance and gardening, especially at Park Gateways.
- * Restore/rebuild decaying bulkhead walls.
- * "Green" existing medians at major streets bordering Lake.
- * Mitigate erosion on steep Lake banks.
- * Bring in additional sand for Lake "Beaches".

B. PROPOSALS FOR EARLY IMPLEMENTATION FOLLOWING FURTHER PLANNING STUDIES:

- * Create bikeway system, with connections to Estuary and Downtown.
- * Improve pedestrian trail systems.
- * Integrate Lake with surrounding parks and urban amenities.
- * Re-route traffic, reorganize on-street parking, and/or fill out into Lake to widen park edges.
- * Re-design Bird Refuge and Rotary Science Center as interpretive nature center.
- * Open up blocked vistas to Lake from Downtown and neighborhoods.
- * Establish design guidelines for park buildings and furnishings.

C. PROPOSALS FOR LONG-RANGE IMPLEMENTATION FOLLOWING IN-DEPTH FEASIBILITY, PLANNING, MARKETING AND DESIGN STUDIES

- * Create Lid Park over Twelfth Street, linking Kaiser Convention Center and Oakland Museum with Lake.
- * Create modern theme park at Children's Fairyland.
- * Provide pumping system and staffing as required to raise average tidal water level.

3.0

Inventory and Analysis

3.0. INVENTORY AND ANALYSIS

An inventory of the natural, social and cultural factors of the Lake Merritt study area was undertaken by the Steering Committee. Discussion of each of 16 inventory maps produced by the committee follows, together with the maps themselves.

3.0 LAKE MERRITT HISTORICAL TIMELINE

Lake Merritt is a tidal slough and marshland; a part of San Antonio Creek currently comprising 155 acres

1820 - 1852

Don Luis Peralta owns the "lake" (part of Ranch San Antonio). The "lake" is used as a transport terminus for goods.

May 1852

City of Oakland incorporates.

1853

Horace Carpentier builds the 12th Street toll bridge across the San Antonio Creek to connect Oakland and Brooklyn.

1868

Carpentier, Merritt and Stanford form the Oakland waterfront Company and assume control of the entire waterfront.

Compromise of 1868 - Oakland Waterfront Company sells 500 acres of the waterfront to Western Pacific Railroad (includes the lake area).

1869

The dam is built north of the 12th Street bridge and the lake is formed.

1869

Mayor Merritt's annual message dedicates the "arm of San Antonio Creek as a public lake."

March 1869

Mayor Merritt proposed a boulevard 60 feet wide and 4 miles long to encompass the lake.

1869

Oakland's sanitary problem is recognized and 2 main sewers are proposed to carry sewage from the lake to the Bay.

March 1870 Governor Henry Haight signs the bill making Lake Merritt the first wildlife refuge in North America.

1871 Bodies are removed from the cemetery at 19th and Harrison Streets, and the land is transformed to a park.

November 1874 Merritt, Newton and Spaulding convey their ownership and rights in the dam to the city. The name Lake Merritt is used officially for the first time.

1875 The issue of sewage disposal reaches a point of action and the Lake Sewer is completed.

1876 The Cameron Stanford house is built as a speculative house on the lake shore north of 12th Street. (Leland Stanford later resided here).

1876 The dam is widened and used as a thoroughfare - the 12th Street bridge is abandoned.

1877 A 200 foot wide "Boulevard" is proposed as a loop around the lake. 90% of City sewage is dumped into the Glen Echo arm of the lake.

1884 A plan for lake improvements is proposed and it is discovered that the city does not own the lake.

1887 Mayor R.W. Davies proposes to dredge the lake and create a beautiful water park.

1891 Mayor Chapman persuades the railroad to sell the city the lake. The city council approves the funds.

1891 The first physical improvement to the lake is begun. A rock wall and dredgings reclaim the area between the dam and E. 18th Street creating Edge Lake Park. Work ceases when a \$500,000 bond for the completion of the project fails.

March 1892 City Engineer, William Boardman, reports that the lake is filling in at the rate of 1" per year.

1893 Mayor Pardee proposes a bond for the dredging of the lake and the creation of a boulevard - the issue passes.

March 1893 The dredging of the lake begins.

1898 A bond issue is brought to the electorate for \$50,000 for improvements of 3 parks and \$240,000 for the purchase of 64 acres of Adams Point - the issue fails.

1905 Mayor Frank Mott hires Charles Mulford Robinson to suggest improvements that would add to the city's attractiveness and enhance civic beauty.

April 1906 A great earthquake hits the Bay Area. A central relief camp is established at Adams Point. Park site at Lake first proposed.

1907 A high-pressure salt water pumping plant is built at "the Willows" to pump water from the lake in the case of a major fire.

A city municipal bond passes - \$1,000,000 are available for new parkland acquisition and development.

Carloads of shrubs and trees are planted in Lakeside Park.

Oakland Public Museum is established in the Cameron-Stanford House.

Construction of El Embarcadero pergola begins. Designer unknown.

1908 A preliminary report outlining park improvements is submitted by the landscape architect Oscar Prager.

Small land parcels around the lake are consolidated.

April 1909 The first Park Commission is created.

1909 Wells are drilled in Lakeside Park and the salt is leached out of the soil. The cistern and McElroy fountain are built.

1909 Work on the boulevard around the lake resumes - Lakeshore Avenue is completed by 1915.

1909 Eastshore Park is created out of filling the area known as "Seven Bridges."

1909 An option is taken on the purchase of the bluffs east of the lake. Option is renewed in 1910.

1910 Canoe House is built, and a horse and carriage drive is constructed through the park.

1911 Municipal band concerts are inaugurated - the contract with the Oakland band is not signed until 1914.

May 1911 State legislature gives the city clear title to the lake and the lands reclaimed from marshlands.

1912 Swimming in the Lake is officially prohibited by a city ordinance.

1912 The lawn bowling greens and tennis courts are completed in Lakeside Park.

1912 Bandstand built; Municipal Boathouse built.

1913 El Embarcadero is completed at a cost of \$17,000.

1913 In observance of Admission Day, electric lights are hung around the lake.

1914 2 wings and piers are added to the pumphouse to complete the Municipal Boathouse (at a cost of \$35,000).

1914 "Canoe House" - today's sailboat house built at Adams Point.

1914 The ornamental boatlanding at E. 18th Street is completed.

1914 Loop roads completed around Lake (except for Lakeside Drive).

1915 The dredging of the lake is completed.

1915 The 12th Street dam is raised, widened and permanently paved.

1915 Planner Werner Hegmann submits his plan for the City of Oakland. He foresees the importance of a Civic Center on the southern shore of the lake.

1915 The organized feeding of waterfowl on the lake begins.

1916 A beach of white Carmel sand is constructed near "The Willows." This marks the beginning of plans to make the lake an inland bathing resort.

1916 Oakland Art Gallery is established in the new Municipal Auditorium.

1918 The Edoff Memorial Bandstand is completed.

1920's High-rise elevator apartment buildings replace wooden victorian houses along Lakeside Drive.

1922 The Snow Museum is established in the former Cutting Residence.

1922 - 1923 City of Oakland fills west shore of lake to make way for Lakeside Drive, which completes the "Boulevard" around the Lake. Many individual waterfront houses lose their waterfront access.

1922 The lake is dredged again and the dredgings used to create islands for the ducks. Feeding ponds are also constructed.

1925 The permanent Necklace of Lights is completed.

January 1926 The park is designated as a government bird banding station.

1926 First Scottish Rites Temple built along Lakeside Drive.

1927 The first powerboat regatta in the Bay Area is held on the lake.

1927 The Lake Merritt Sailing Club is chartered.

1927 Lake Merritt Hotel built.

1928 The Beaux Art style Veterans Memorial Building is completed in Adams Park.

1935	The western lawn bowling courts are completed in Lakeside Park.
1938 - 1939	Scottish Rite temple remodeled in art deco style.
1940's	Kaiser Convention Center and Alameda County Courthouse built.
1941	Necklace of Lights turned off and subsequently abandoned after the bombing of Pearl Harbor.
1945	The large parking lot north of the Canoe House (Sailboat House) is constructed in Lakeside Park.
1946	Design work is begun on Children's Fairyland.
1950	Children's Fairyland opens.
1950's	Water contact sports first prohibited due to high level of water pollution. Log boom is set out in winter months to protect waterfowl from boats.
1953	The Rotary Nature Center is completed.
1954	The Sailboat House (former Canoe House) is renovated in Lakeside Park.
1956	The plan is revealed to ring the lake in Cherry Trees that would rival the famed Cherry Trees of Washington D.C.
1959	The Lakeside Garden Center Complex is completed.
1960	The Lakeside Inn Complex is completed.
1965	Golf putting green, a lath house, cactus garden, and public restaurant and take-out counter are installed in Lakeside Park.
1969	The Parks and the Recreation departments merge.
1969	The new Oakland Museum opens. The Snow Museum building and Cameron-Stanford House are abandoned.

- 1969 Channel Park built and sculpture garden installed (designed by Garrett Eckbo)
- 1969 Estuary Park built (designed by Lawrence Halprin)
- 1969 First annual "Festival at the Lake" in Lakeside Park
- 1987 Necklace of Lights restored and turned on with a fireworks celebration

3.1 HYDROLOGY

Lake Merritt is a tidal estuary with varying salinity. Its original borders were slightly larger than today's, especially along Harrison Street and between El Embarcadero and Lake Park Avenues where extensive marshes were filled. Marshland occupied the mouths of the four creeks entering the Lake, which have now been culverted: Glen Echo Creek, Pleasant Valley Creek, Trestle Glen Creek and Park Boulevard Creek. Water level is controlled at the Seventh Street Pump Station, where tide gates allow Bay waters to fill the Lake, passing through culverts beneath Twelfth Street. The Lake provides drainage for a major watershed consisting of 4670 acres defined by ridge lines in the Oakland Hills parallel to Highway 13, along Park Boulevard on the east and in the vicinity of Broadway to San Pablo Avenue on the west. Water quality is the subject of extensive public debate and while sanitary sewer inflow has been diverted from the Lake, breakages may cause occasional sewer inflow. Currently, the average water depth in the Lake is about _____.

3.2 VEGETATION AND TREE COVER

The tree plantings at Lake Merritt are highly diverse, especially within Lakeside Park, which includes the small botanical gardens of the Garden Center. It is beyond the scope of this study to provide a complete tree inventory, but several basic points about Lake Merritt's planting can be made.

The Lake borders along Lakeshore Avenue and Lakeside Drive contain many mature eucalyptus trees of several species, with the most remarkable specimens being the *Eucalyptus globulus* and others surrounding the Camron-Stanford House. Many other diverse tree plantings exist along Lakeshore north of Eighteenth Street and along Lakeside Drive.

Lakeshore south of Eighteenth Street is especially lacking in tree cover, and what few trees exist are restricted to the short, bushy *Melaleuca nesophila*. The Twelfth Street lake border is completely devoid of tree planting. Harrison Street's narrow lake border is also virtually without any mature trees. In general, where the lake borders are narrowest, the fewest trees are present. Yet these are the areas most crucially in need of trees.

While highly diverse, the plantings in Lakeside Park can be said to follow the theme of an oak woodland set by Adams Point's original native plant community. Along with the many native Coast Live Oak (*Quercus agrifolia*) are to be found Cork Oak, the tree from which cork is extracted (*Quercus suber*) and several species of eastern deciduous oaks, including Red Oak, (*Quercus borealis*). This oak woodland theme or foundation should be retained in any new planting/master plan.

Grand Avenue has an excellent boulevard planting of London Plane trees (*Platanus x acerifolia*) which has been continued in some recently planted median trees along Harrison Street. A planting master plan for Lake Merritt should consider utilizing London Planes as street trees along the boulevards leading to Grand Avenue. This program of street tree plantings will do much to create the "park precinct" concept discussed elsewhere in this report.

Channel Park has much less diverse tree plantings than Lakeside Park. Among them the most memorable are two groves of Lombardy Poplars (*Populus nigra* 'Italica.') Estuary Park, while mostly an open meadow, contains rows of London Planes along the Channel and Washingtonia palms along the Estuary.

Recently the Office of Parks and Recreation has planted several groves of flowering cherry trees along the Lake edges, including one grove at Harrison Street and two off of Grand Avenue near the El Embarcadero pergola. These cherries will provide the first showy flowering trees the Lake has had in recent years, and will complement the characteristic plantings of the gnarled Australian Tea Tree (*Leptospermum Laevigatum*) which dot the Lake shores. These trees contribute greatly to the imageability of Lake Merritt.

On the ground, turf areas are much more common than groundcover areas, which befits opening the maximum amount of park space to direct human use. At the same time, thought should be given to substituting ground covers in shady areas under tree canopy where grass does not flourish.

Finally, any planting master plan will have to be predicated on a new, efficient automatic irrigation system. Currently, the obsolete hydraulic system is not functioning adequately and patches of brown grass alternate with patches of green in more or less of a 50:50 ratio.

3.3 LAKESHORE AVENUE RELIEF SEWER

The Lakeshore Avenue Relief Sewer is part of a major city effort to upgrade both sanitary sewer and storm sewer systems throughout much of the Lake Merritt Watershed. Engineering drawings have been completed for a proposed route that will unfortunately cut through the Lakeshore park border, entailing removal of seven mature trees. Storm drain outfalls will continue to drain into the Lake.

3.4 WILDLIFE REFUGE

The Wildlife Refuge is the first in the United States, having been founded by the California State legislature in 1870, upon the persuasion of Samuel Merritt. It consists of a fall and winter refuge which fills the Trestle Glen Arm (or northeast branch) of the Lake and a permanent refuge centered around five "bird islands". The fall-winter refuge is set up to provide habitat for waterfowl on migration along the "Pacific Flyway" which runs up and down the west coast of North America. The permanent refuge includes a man-made freshwater duck pond, the Rotary Natural Science Center Building and several bird cages for injured birds including a geodesic dome cage.

The fall-winter refuge is separated from the boating portion of the Lake by a log boom in winter time only.

3.5 TRAFFIC VOLUMES

Lake Merritt is ringed by major traffic arteries whose volume and speed prevaricate against the park having a peaceful, suburban character. Traffic is a constant reminder that Lake Merritt is an urban park in the central city. In descending prominence, the traffic systems around the Lake can be ranked by volume as follows:

1. The two freeways, I-580 and I-880.
2. Major arterials including Grand Avenue, Harrison Street, MacArthur Boulevard, Lake Park and the Twelfth Street Expressway.
3. Minor arterials, including Oak Street, Lakeside Drive, Lakeshore Avenue, El Embarcadero and East Eighteenth Street.
4. All other city streets.

3.6 TRAFFIC AND TRANSPORTATION PATTERNS

All of the streets ringing Lake Merritt are two-way, with the exception of Lakeside Drive south of Nineteenth Street and the El Embarcadero couplet. AC Transit routes cover two-thirds of the Lake loop road system, with the marked exception being Lakeside Drive. Passengers along the western side of the Lake are diverted onto Madison and Webster Streets. This diversion is due at least in part to Lakeside being a one-way street.

Creation of a true bus loop around the lake is a desirable goal if bus service is to cater to park users. The Lake Merritt BART station also serves the Lake, but as it is located quite a few blocks south of Twelfth Street, and since the Lake is invisible from the station location, it is undoubtedly difficult for the public to perceive it as a desirable means of accessing the Lake and its parks. The Nineteenth Street BART Station on Broadway has more direct access to the Lake along 20th Street and has the advantage of providing a view of the lake from the BART exit.

Parking around the Lake includes both metered two-hour and non-metered parallel spaces. Parking is not permitted along Lakeshore Avenue on Saturdays, Sundays and holidays from 1:00 to 7:00 PM, a measure which was instituted to prevent drug trafficking but which has had the happy effect of creating a weekend bike lane on Lakeshore.

3.7 BIKEWAYS AND PEDESTRIAN PATHS

There is no true bikeway system around the Lake; only a series of different surfaces upon which it is possible to ride. Bike route signs have been posted along Bellevue Drive, Grand Avenue east of Bellevue, Lakeshore Avenue and at the pedestrian underpass linking Twelfth Street with the Kaiser Convention Center parking lot. The only striped bike lane in a street near the lake exists along the short stretch of Bellevue Drive between Perkins Street and Grand Avenue. A relatively safe haven for bicyclists also exists along the Bellevue Drive loop through Lakeside Park, where the only conflict is cars backing out of angled parking spaces. Elsewhere around the Lake, cyclists have tough going: they must contend with parked cars, moving traffic, pedestrians and joggers. Even the Lakeshore Avenue bike route signs do not make clear whether cyclists should use the roadways or the city sidewalk.

On the west side of the Lake, cyclists must choose between traveling in the traffic of Harrison Street or sharing the narrow lake-edge promenade parallel to Harrison with joggers and pedestrians. A connection between the Lake and Channel Park exists by way of the pedestrian underpass mentioned above, but this connection is not indicated by signs and most people are unaware that it exists. No direct connection is possible between Channel and Estuary Parks.

The system of pedestrian and jogging paths is much more extensive than the bike network. However, no specific provision has been made for soft low-impact paths for jogging and joggers have cut such trails through the grass in many locations. The pathways need to be upgraded with clear delineations made between those primarily intended for walking and those meant for jogging. A soft paving material such as decomposed granite fines could be used for the jogging paths.

3.8 LAKE AND CHANNEL BORDERS

As stated many times in this report, the extremely narrow park borders fronting on Lake Merritt are a major constraint to effective park use. Borders less than fifty feet wide are perceived as narrow and cramped; many portions of the Lake borders are thirty feet or less wide. With the obvious exception of Lakeside Park, the only places where the width of the park borders feels adequate are located south of Bellevue Drive and Grand Avenue east of Perkins Street; west of Lakeshore Avenue north of Wesley Avenue; and east of Lakeside Drive south of Seventeenth Street.

3.9 PARK LANDS SURROUNDING LAKE MERRITT

As mentioned elsewhere in this report, park advocates in the past were unsuccessful in obtaining public approval for the creation of a single Lake Merritt Park incorporating the Lake and its borders, Adams Point, and the Channel. Consequently, a number of smaller parks or parklets were set up around the Lake. These, in descending order of size, include Lakeside Park, Channel Park, the Northern Shore, the Western Shore, Estuary Park, and Eastshore Park. Other yet smaller parks include Peralta Park between the Lake and the Channel; Snow Park at the bend in Harrison Street; Adams Park at the War Memorial Building off of Grand and Harrison; Athol Plaza tennis courts at Lakeshore and East Eighteenth Streets; and two parks--Pine Knoll and the Cleveland Cascade--along Lakeshore Avenue. The small triangular park between I-580 and Lake Park which contains a dry, scallop-edged fountain, has no name that I know of.

3.10 LAND USE SURROUNDING THE LAKE PARK SYSTEM

Extremely diverse land uses exist around the Lake--all major categories are present. To generalize, highrise residential and related commercial uses characterize Lakeside Drive and highrise offices front Harrison Street along the west side of the Lake. Grand Avenue is represented by mixed commercial and lowrise residential uses, with many restaurants, convenience stores, specialty shops, two churches and two residential highrises. A major retail district exists directly to the east of the study area, along Grand and Lakeshore Avenues. The east side of the Lake is almost entirely multi-family residential, with a few residential high-rises and two churches. Another commercial district exists just east of the study area along the East Eighteenth Street corridor.

The south shore of the lake is devoted almost entirely to institutional and civic uses, including the Alameda County Courthouse, Oakland Museum, Kaiser Convention Center, Laney College and Oakland School District Headquarters. Taken together, these institutional uses form a critical mass which could be developed into a major civic and cultural center for the City of Oakland.

Along the Channel, Laney College and its vast parking lot south of Seventh Street are the major uses. This parking lot could be utilized in a plan to consolidate "magnet" parking areas for park use. East of the channel and north of Tenth Street lies the Oakland School District headquarters building.

Between the Nimitz Freeway and Embarcadero are to be found light industrial and commercial uses located alongside two sets of Southern Pacific railroad tracks. Between Embarcadero and the Estuary shoreline are a mix of commercial and residential uses, including the "Portobello" residential complex and the Rusty Scupper Restaurant. Shipping industries are located east of the Channel along the Estuary.

A very few single-family residential units are nestled in with multi-family buildings at many points around the Lake.

3.11 ZONING

Existing city zoning is primarily residential, with commercial zones to be found along Grand Avenue, northeast of the Lake, along East Eighteenth Street and along the Fourteenth Street downtown corridor. The large district south of the Lake is zoned S-2, institutional.

Of most interest for the CAT study is the fact that very few height limitations have been placed on buildings. More often, height and bulk is restricted by floor area ratio (F.A.R.). Yet two industrial zones south of the Nimitz Freeway have no FAR restrictions whatsoever.

3.12 BUILDING HEIGHTS

The vast majority of buildings around the Lake are under ten stories in height. The major exception to this is a cluster of high-rise offices fronting on Harrison Street surrounding Kaiser Center, in an area currently undergoing extensive high-rise developments. Harrison Street has recently been widened to make way for "Lake Merritt Tower II" at the intersection of Grand Avenue and Harrison, which will be the tallest building in Oakland. Tower I at ten stories is under construction at the date of writing and Grand Avenue is scheduled to be widened to accommodate the user populations of both towers. Currently, the tallest building in Oakland is the Ordway Building near the Lake edge in the vicinity of Harrison and Twenty-first Street.

Other high-rise buildings of eleven stories and higher are scattered around the Lake, including two residential high-rises fronting on Bellevue Drive; one on Lakeshore at Twelfth Street; and four high-rise buildings along Lakeside Drive, of which one is the Scottish Rites Temple.

It should be noted that the Kaiser Convention Center is equivalent in height to a seven story building. Its great length and mass makes it every bit as visually prominent as the high-rises. Perhaps most significant as a landmark is the high-rise Alameda County Courthouse at the southwest corner of the Lake.

64

3.13 LANDMARKS AND CULTURAL RESOURCES

The Lake Merritt study area is extremely rich in landmarks and cultural resources. A list of 35 such resources has been compiled by the CAT Team, as indicated on the accompanying map.

3.14 RECREATIONAL ACTIVITIES

Recreation opportunities at Lake Merritt are extensive and highly varied, from boating, including pedal boats, rowboats, canoes and skulls to tennis, softball, lawn bowling, and even fishing. The CAT Team has compiled a list of 25 of the major recreational activities at the Lake, as indicated on the accompanying map. The list was generated both by observations of existing facilities and observations of how people use the facilities.

3.15 CRIME

Several years ago, Lakeside Park was the site of an extensive drug-dealing operation along Bellevue Drive which was stopped by mounted rangers, increased police patrols and the imposition of parking fees on weekend days. More recently, a few isolated incidents of major crime including rapes and the discovery of a corpse have been reported. Lake Merritt is an urban park with the typical problems of urban crime. Yet crime levels have not been unduly high and crime is not a significant deterrent to most desirable park activities.

Areas identified by the police as being most crime-intensive include Bellevue Drive (though this may be primarily a recollection of its "bad-old-days,") the Adams Point Boathouse parking lot, the Lakeside Park fountain, the shoreline along Lakeshore Avenue, the vicinity of the domed bird cage in the wildlife refuge, and perhaps most significantly, the pedestrian underpasses at Twelfth Street. These underpasses, rarely patrolled, are decaying and suffer from inadequate lighting, seasonal flooding from leaks, badly worn paving, broken glass as well as other trash, and graffiti. In addition, they are regularly used for urinating. A major renovation of the underpasses is badly needed.

4.0 SUMMARY OF THE FOUR PUBLIC WORKSHOPS

The five public workshops were scheduled at designated neighborhood recreation centers by the Office of Parks and Recreation beginning on March 29, 1989 and terminating on May 21, 1989.

It is difficult to summarize about popular opinion regarding the many planning concepts and recommendations of the CAT Team, but some general points can be made, as follows. Note that five workshops were planned and scheduled by the Office of Parks and Recreation but the third workshop, scheduled for Brookfield Recreation Center in east Oakland, was unattended. The lack of attendance was probably due to two factors: the physical remoteness of Brookfield and its surrounding neighborhood to Lake Merritt, and the traditional preoccupation of Brookfield's neighborhood groups and group leaders with local neighborhood issues, such as drugs and crime.

In general, there was a strong consensus in favor of improving the Lake's appearance, eradicating algae and improving environmental conditions for fish habitat. Proposals for a planting master plan were also looked upon with universal favor, as well as the concept of making the wildlife refuge a more natural, enhanced habitat area. No one appeared to disagree with suggestions to reorganize programs at Rotary Science Center around the twin themes of the Pacific Flyway and Birds or Nature of Lake Merritt, except for a few persons who recommended tearing the Rotary Science Center down.

The Twelfth Street Lid Park concept was generally popular, although a significant minority felt that an on-grade boulevard with an esplanade at the lake edge was a better idea or at least more likely to be implemented. People expressed disagreement over the concept of filling parts of the Lake to mitigate narrow borders, with some participants saying that it was an idea worthy of further study and others strongly opposed.

As to traffic modifications, people felt that they were worthy of further study but should be approached cautiously, lest traffic patterns become more untenable than they are today. A highly vocal minority was opposed to any traffic changes. The bikeway concept was endorsed by virtually all participants, with nobody stating that bicycles should be banned from the Lake. However, people expressed concern that bicyclists should be controlled by imposing a speed limit or other devices to minimize or

4.0

Public Workshops and Community Group Presentations

3.16 VISUAL ANALYSIS

The CAT Team prepared a visual analysis map, concentrating on significant views and landmarks. Views across the Lake to Downtown from the east shore are as important as views from the west shore, across the Lake to the Oakland Hills. In addition, vistas of the Lake down the downtown street corridors are vital in linking the Lake and its parks with downtown Oakland. Just as the ideal house is linked intimately with its garden, downtown buildings can be linked with Lake Merritt Park and views to the Lake are the major device for achieving this linkage. Several initially or wholly blocked lake views have been indicated on the map to imply an opportunity to open up or improve these visual links to the Lake.

Places marked as highly visible landmarks on the map include the bandstand in Lakeside Park, the many highrises surrounding the Lake, the pergola at El Embarcadero, the Kaiser Convention Center, the Alameda County Courthouse, Camron-Stanford House, Lakeside Drive Boathouse and the Scottish Rites Temple.

prevent conflicts with pedestrians. Some preferred that the bikeway be entirely a bike lane in the streets looping the Lake, but by and large people preferred the concept of a bikeway located through parkland, with combination bike lane in street/bikeway in park being recognized as a necessary compromise.

An inherent conservatism or preference for the status quo was especially apparent in several strongly negative responses to the concept of making Children's Fairyland a more active theme park. People's strongest concerns overall involved improving the water quality as well as safety and security at and around the Lake.

Several new ideas, not included in the CAT Team's list of "opportunities" and "potential design responses", were generated by the participants. Among these, perhaps the most interesting was the concept of providing a public transit shuttle by boat across the Lake from north to south and east to west. The related concept of restricting parking to several parking lots at the corners of the Lake, rather than relying entirely on limited on-street parking spaces, was generally popular. A closely related idea which could be implemented in conjunction with transit by boat was the suggestion to either improve the existing weekend loop bus service or create a new mini-bus regular loop route service.

Another suggestion which was brought up at two of the workshops was the recommendation to restore the Lakeside Drive boathouse to recreational use, possibly necessitating a move by Office of Parks and Recreation back to offices in City Hall or its vicinity. A subsequent conversation with a member of the Rowing Club has indicated that the club might need to use only the lower floor of the building; offices on the ground (or second) floor could be retained without interfering with boathouse use.

Many of the participants at the Montclair Recreation Center workshop were highly sophisticated grass-roots political organizers, experienced at fundraising and lobbying for specific agendas. One significant point brought up at the Montclair workshop was the desirability of setting up a Lake Merritt Park Special Planning District as an independent entity, outside of exclusive City control. Such a planning district, it was asserted, would be much more attractive to the State Legislature as a recipient of State funds for park improvements, since the Legislature is reluctant to interfere in city park programs, policies and budgets.

4.1 FIRST OF FIVE PUBLIC WORKSHOPS

Date: March 29, 1989

Place: De Fremery Recreation Center

Number of Attendees: 13 including Bill McDavid,
Recreation Director

Description of Attendees: all attendees except one were female; three were white, one was Asian, the remainder were black.

Ages: all were approximately 60 or older except for two between 25 and 60

A. General Discussion brought up the following points generated by the attendees:

1. Rotary Science Center: there is critical need for updated, free children's science education programs. These programs have not been updated in 30 years.
2. Bird refuge: need for preservation: this is the first refuge in the U.S. Need for city to provide free birdseed to children for feeding birds.
3. Park safety: there is safety in numbers--park would benefit from more use. More dollars are needed from city for security.
4. Parks maintenance needs to be improved, with a better staff showing more pride in their work.
5. Allocation of Measure AA funds: more of the \$10 million of AA funds should be allocated to Lake and its parks. A newspaper article in today's Tribune reported \$500,000 only in funds for Lakeside Park.
6. Consideration should be given to an alternate (public amenity) use for Office of Parks and Recreation HQ building.
7. Rotary Science Center: need for integration of school district and Science Center nature education programs.
8. Children's Fairyland: tickets are too expensive for most families.
9. Allocation of Measure AA Funds: A citizen's watchdog committee should be set up to monitor allocation of funds.

10. Staffing for proposed improvements is critical: example--need for staffing at pump station if water level is to be raised regularly.
11. Handicap access should be improved and park should be made accessible to both elderly and disabled. Included is need for accessible restrooms at Rotary Science Center and accessible picnic tables. Signage in braille for all park amenities should be provided.
12. Police horse stables near bandstand in Lakeside Park: need for an adjacent exercise stable.
13. Conflicts between joggers and people enjoying duck pond need to be resolved. People have been knocked down by joggers at duck pond.
14. Open-backed park benches are dangerous - potential for people to fall through.

B. Discussion focused on specific proposals of CAT Team resulted in consensus on the following issues, with discussion as noted:

1. Master planting plan should be implemented. Use elderly volunteer gardeners to help plant trees.
2. Erosion on sloping banks should be mitigated.
3. Improved parks maintenance is highly desirable.
4. Lake water level should be raised as proposed, once per tidal cycle.
5. Beaches should have new sand brought in.
6. Signage around park should be improved.
7. Rotary Science Center should be reorganized around theme of Lake and its ecology. Paul Covell's advice and suggestions should be considered in this.
8. Lid Park connecting Lake with Kaiser Convention Center and Oakland Museum should be designed and built.
9. Children's Fairyland should be updated to take account of modern technology.

10. Filling at Lake edge: studies should determine whether filling would violate, damage or adversely affect bird habitat prior to concluding whether or not to fill.
11. Bike lanes.
 - a. bike lanes should be kept separate from walking trails.
 - b. bike paths should be adequately signed and identified.
 - c. bikes should not be allowed everywhere.
 - d. alternatives worthy of study are: either keep bike lane in street only or allow combination of bike lane in street and through park where park is wide enough to accommodate bike lane.
12. Traffic re-routing: this issue is worthy of study. Specific study could include feasibility of establishing a one-way system, around the Lake, but there was not consensus that a one-way system would be superior to existing two-way system.

C. The following related points and conclusions were made:

1. Raising the Lake level should be a high priority --it needs to be done.
2. Bird refuge should be especially high priority: do not violate with any proposed improvements at Lake.
3. A safety network composed of local volunteer groups such as the Gosling Watchers and Friends of the Wildlife Refuge should be set up to watch for (and keep out) the appearance of drugs at the Lake.
4. Garden Center would benefit by having a Hall of Flowers similar to that in Golden Gate Park.
5. Boat races should be excluded from Lake even for one day on July 4.
6. Signage underscoring "no dogs" rule should be improved and added.

7. Traffic: there is a bottleneck in the traffic system near Grand Avenue and the one-way systems opening onto it from (and to) Lakeshore.
8. Enlarging lake edges: making 450 canted borders vertical will add some space to lake edge along Lakeshore south of Eighteenth Street.
9. The bird refuge should be perceived as encompassing the whole lake.

List of Participants, First of Five Public Workshops,
3/29/89

Name	Affiliation and/or Address
Brooks Kolb	Lake Merritt "CAT" Project
Scott Stohler	Lake Merritt "CAT" Project
Frezell Cindy Jones	Young Old Timers
Birtese Cowden	Young Old Timers
Ms. Lea Bertha	
Lowe-Young	Young Old Timers
Connie Jeffries	Young Old Timers
Miss Maggie Thomas	Young Old Timers
Norma Finley	Young Old Timers
Barbara Oshinsky	Gosling Watchers of Lake Merritt; Preservation of Lake Merritt; 1370 East 27th Street, 94606
Barbara Dorsey	"Lake Merritt Regular" 2506 Avenue; Oakland, CA 94606
Barbara Ferguson	Gosling Watchers of Lake Merritt; Friends of the Wildlife Refuge; 333 Lenox Avenue #3; Oakland, CA 94610
Willie Eaton	(415)893-1008; 2907 Linden Street
James I. Terada	Gosling Watchers, Sierra Club, Adams Point Preservation Society, Oceanic Society; 262 Vernon Street, Apt. 306; Oakland, CA 94610

4.2 SECOND OF FIVE PUBLIC WORKSHOPS

Date: April 5, 1989

Place: Montclair Recreation Center

Number of Attendees: 8 including Bernice Ratto,
Recreation Director

Description of Attendees: 7 attendees were white; one was
Asian. Two were male; six were female.

Ages: Ranged from mid-thirties to seventies.

A. General Discussion brought up the following points
generated by the attendees:

1. If the Lid Park over 12th Street is implemented, it should not have a vertical barrier; e.g. no abrupt change or grade between Lake and Lid Park.
2. Army Corps. of Engineers could contribute sand, for Lake beaches, bulkhead walls, etc. The Corps. is always delighted to take on such projects. Corps. could also build vertical bulkhead walls where they are currently at 45 degree angle.
3. Funding: Measure AA funds will only allow \$500,000 for Lakeside Park. It is useless to try to get more AA funds. Better to try for matching state and federal grants to fund proposed improvements. Note however: \$500,000 allocation is for Lakeside Park only; maybe more AA funds could be made available for rest of Lake, Channel, etc.
4. Many of the parks surrounding Lake Merritt are underused and unknown to public. Potential solution: trolley route (or Bermuda Taxi type vehicles as used at Disneyland, Universal Studios, etc.) could be set up as loop around Lake, Channel and Estuary. Main starting point could be at Park HQ building, but a variety of stops would be a good idea. Purchase of one ticket should be good all day and should be transferrable to AC Transit. Note especially that the Channel is "lost to most of the public".
5. Parking: parking could be concentrated in various places, encouraging people to take advantage of the trolley system.

6. Funding sources for park improvements could include a) private donations from individuals; b) from companies and big business; c) from the Oakland Museum.
7. State Legislature should be encouraged to vote for funding Lake Merritt Park Improvements. State Park funds should be made available. William Penn Mott should be consulted for ideas, suggestions.
8. Funding: boat clubs could be instrumental in funding drives.
9. Creation of a special "Lake Merritt Park District," apart from the Office of Parks and Recreation, could act as its own agent in searching for funds. This special parks district would be removed from the political arena of the City of Oakland. Legislature would be more interested in funding special district as long as it is separate from City control, since State is reluctant to get involved in local (city) politics.
10. Oakland Chamber of Commerce should be very interested in CAT project proposals.
11. Historic walking tours should be a recreational use of the Lake and its parks.
12. Lid Park: potential cost must be known in order to present to City Council and get their support. Unanimous Council support will be necessary to support Lid Park proposal.
13. Public transportation: better access to Lake from neighborhoods is important.
14. Security: better lighting in pedestrian underpasses is vital.
15. Concessions as a method of generating revenue for park improvements: concessions just generate litter--objection to more food concessions at Lake.
16. No more buildings should be built at Lake--this includes more concessions and restaurants.

17. Long range planting plan: plan should include planting cherry trees for their high visual impact. A tree planting dedication program would be a useful fundraising method for other park improvements. Trees could be obtained from the California Dept. of Agriculture at low cost.
18. Lid Park: building this would sacrifice views of the Lake from passing cars.
19. Parking revenue from off-street parking fund should not be used to finance park improvements, except as regards adding parking for park use.
20. Boat cruises on the Lake should be increased as a means to get more people out on the Lake.
21. Parking: vandalism of cars is a problem. New parking facilities need security. Parking lots need to be integrated with trolley service around Lake.
22. Presentation to City Council: Council will want to know what can be done immediately; what is long-term; and what is a big ticket item that can be put off. All Council members will be interested.
23. Access to the Lake must be provided from all parts of the City.
24. Security: there is need for immediate improvements in security at the pedestrian underpasses, such as at Twelfth Street. Underpasses need to be cleaned up and better lit.

B. Discussion focused on specific proposals of CAT Team resulted in the following points, on which there was general consensus:

1. Traffic re-routing: two one-way streets at the "Embarcadero" near the Lakeview Branch Library could be combined into one two-way street.
2. Security: all-terrain tricycle vehicles could be employed by police to supplement car and horseback patrols.
3. Bulkhead walls: rock and rubble walls look better than concrete.

4. Aquatic plants at water edge introduced to combat algae growth and undesirable weedy plants could aggravate the existing litter problems.
5. Bikes and bike lanes:
 - a. bikes should not be eliminated from the Lake: it's a good level area for them.
 - b. bikes should be able to follow a loop around the Lake - bicyclists will want to go all the way around Lake.
 - c. bike speeding tickets could help solve problem of conflicts between pedestrians and bicyclists.
 - d. bike loop route should be clearly marked and signed. Should be lane in street for most of its length (especially where park borders are narrow).
6. Rotary Science Center and Wildlife Refuge.
 - a. Center needs total revamping. It's "tacky, not inviting", and needs remodeling.
 - b. theme for exhibits should be birds of Lake Merritt and theme of "connectedness" between people and nature at the lake; also connectedness of Lake with whole bird migration.
 - c. Wildlife Refuge facilities need reconstruction "top to bottom."
7. Architectural design guidelines for park buildings and street and site furnishings:
 - a. design guidelines are always a flawed process to implement, especially in view of City bureaucracy (an example is debate over Christian Science Church last year).
 - b. design style or theme should be in keeping with the original site furnishings, such as the necklace of lights.

8. Fill at lake edges as proposed to alleviate narrow park borders.
 - a. consensus was not reached on this point: one participant felt strongly that there should be no fill; another felt that fill was acceptable as long as compensation was made by cutting lake borders in other areas to insure that Lake area remained equal after the filling. (This is the BCDC policy).
 - b. generally there seemed to be consensus that fill is not the best or optimum solution to problem of narrow park borders; those who were not opposed to fill per se felt it is a low priority approach to the problem, not worth the political controversy it would engender.
9. Lid Park over Twelfth Street:
 - a. Pros: is a good idea and would be best not funded from City General Fund. Would bring more people and activities to Lake, which would improve level of safety.
 - b. Cons: is very high cost; might be built at expense of providing funds for neighborhood services (especially at Lake if funded from City General Fund).
 - c. Lid Park would involve a more intensive use of the Lake's south bank. Reactions to such intensive use were mixed--one participant felt that mixed use and intensive use would result in a more alive safer area; another felt that this would intensify stress on the surrounding park lands at the expense of preserving grass, etc.
 - d. needs scale model for effective presentation to Council.
 - e. conclusion seemed to be that the Lid Park is neither a good or bad idea; it is an idea needing more input. All seemed to agree that the park's potential price tag must be known before public discussion proceeds further.

10. Children's Fairyland:

- a. Fairyland needs an upgrade: William Penn Mott, its founder, should be consulted for his ideas.
- b. there is room to add new exhibits without expanding Fairyland's area.
- c. area should not be expanded at the expense of reducing area for walking and jogging trails.
- d. Fairyland will/is being judged by kids in comparison with other theme parks. Any upgrade program should take these comparisons into account.

11. Raising water level:

- a. unanimous consensus was evident that "this is a must".
- b. a jet at the south end of the Lake is also a good idea.

12. Zoning for height limitations: this is a worthy goal but not feasible due to "impossible" city bureaucracy and developer clout; e.g. government climate in which all development is perceived as good for Oakland.

13. One final general comment seemed highly relevant to overall master planning objectives: no existing useable open space available free of charge to the public should be lost at the expense of building something new that will require an admissions charge.

List of Participants, Second of Five Public Workshops,
4/5/89

Name	Affiliation and/or Address
Brooks Kolb	Lake Merritt "CAT"
Jerry Rose	Merriewood-Forest Park Homeowner's Association; 5724 Thornhill Dr.; Oakland, CA 94611; (415) 339-1719
Jeanne Phillips	Diamond Improvement Association Upper Lincoln Height; 2000 Charleston Street; Oakland, CA 94602; (415) 482-2117
Valerie Winemiller	Piedmont Avenue Neighborhood Improvement League
Barry Miller	"CAT" Project
Karen McArdle	"CAT" Project
Bernice Ratto	Montclair Recreation Center Director
James L. Terada	Gosling Watchers; Oceanic Society; Adams Point Preservation; Sierra Club
Patricia Chattocl	1550 E 38th Street, 50-676 CA 94602
Debbie Lefkowitz	Resident (Berkeley)
Marjorie Saunders	9301 Skyline Blvd. Pied Pnes - & Hillside Garden Club

4.3 THIRD OF FIVE PUBLIC WORKSHOPS SCHEDULED FOR BROOKFIELD RECREATION CENTER ON APRIL 22, 1989 WAS CANCELLED DUE TO LACK OF ATTENDANCE

4.4 FOURTH OF FIVE PUBLIC WORKSHOPS

Date: May 13, 1989

Place: Manzanita Recreation Center

Number of Attendees: Nine including Herb Chan, Manzanita Recreation Director and Jean Percey, Director of Children's Fairyland.

Description of Attendees: all attendees except two were white; one Asian and one black person were present. Three of the nine attendees were female.

A. General Discussion brought up the following points generated by the attendees:

1. Improved public transit around the Lake would be a good idea; mini-buses such as those used in the National Parks and at such private tourist attractions as Disneyland and Universal Studios could be used to make continual loops around the Lake.
2. Using boats to provide transit across the Lake would be another excellent approach. The existing "Merritt Queen" stern-wheeler could be used in addition to other colorful or unique boats.
3. The boat landing at Eighteenth Street would make a good boat terminal for public transit by boat. It could be redesigned to accommodate this transit.
4. Trash is a major problem which could be solved by installing modern concrete trash receptacles to replace the existing cardboard ones. In addition, monthly clean-ups could be planned by grass-roots neighborhood groups as a volunteer community effort.

B. Discussion focused on specific proposals of the CAT Team resulted in the following points:

1. Reduction of traffic volume on Lakeshore Drive south of Eighteenth Street (as proposed in the slideshow) is a good idea; local residents would probably approve as well.
2. Re-routing traffic south of Eighteenth Street from Lakeshore Drive to First Avenue would also solve the existing problem of people running the red light at this location, which happens all the time.
3. Filling the Lake in selected areas to widen park borders is worth investigating; is probably a worthwhile idea. Filling at 18th Street is a good idea and should be combined with using the Boat Landing as a boat launch. Study its impact on wildlife; if filling is done it should be done minimally.
4. Parking should be planned so as to encourage parking for park use and discourage parking around the Lake for non-park use.
5. Discussion of bike trail and bike/pedestrian conflicts:
6. The public workshops would have more impact if all concerned interest groups could be brought together in one, general "Friends of Lake Merritt" meeting (I explained that this was the intention of the workshops).
 - a. conflicts exist between roller skaters, bicyclists and pedestrians, among others.
 - b. Bellevue Drive could be used for biking on weekends.
 - c. one possibility is to look into banning cars from making a circuit all around the Lake; (can entire roads be eliminated?)
 - d. a place for roller skating is needed.
 - e. speed regulation of bicyclists (by means of signs, police presence) will do much to solve conflict between bicyclists and pedestrians.

7. Discussion of the proposed Twelfth Street Lid Park
 - a. Lid Park would result in a higher destiny of buildings and land uses which can create its own series of problems.
 - b. building an on-grade roadway and public esplanade at Twelfth Street to replace the existing expressway-like street is more feasible than building a lid park over Twelfth Street.
8. Discussion of water quality and raising water level.
 - a. water quality problems should be communicated to all interest groups.
 - b. interpretive signage along waterfront trails should be used to communicate Lake Merritt's tidal nature and tidal features to the public.
 - c. raising the average tidal level at the Lake is a good idea.
9. A specialized jogging trail around the Lake is needed.
10. Eliminating a road (or roads) by the Lakeview Branch of the Oakland Public Library is a good idea.

List of Participants, Fourth of Five Public Workshops,
5/13/89

Name	Affiliation and/or Address
Brooks Kolb	Lake Merritt CAT
Craig Machado	365 Perkins #306; Oakland, CA 94610
Rick Hasbany	365 Perkins #306; Oakland, CA 94610
Herb Chan	Manzanita Neighborhood Center/ Oakland Office of Parks and Recreation; 532-428; 2701-22nd Avenue
Jean Percey	Director, Children's Fairyland
Christine Besack	Lake Merritt Neighbor; 3247 Kempton Avenue; Oakland, CA 94610
A. Chapa	Oakland Park and Recreation
Zoia Horn	1555 Lakeside Drive #92; Oakland, CA
R. Dean Galloway	1555 Lakeside Drive #92; Oakland, CA
James Draper	377 Santa Clara #106; Oakland, CA

4.5 FIFTH OF FIVE PUBLIC WORKSHOPS

Date: May 21, 1989

Place: Lakeside Garden Center

Number of Attendees: 31 including two CAT Team committee members

Description of Attendees: Mostly white; 13 females; adults mostly age 30 and up; several seniors.

A. General Discussion brought up the following points generated by the attendees:

1. Water quality at the Lake is a major concern; there was a perception among at least some of the group that poor water quality is caused by sanitary sewer dumping in the Lake.
2. Lake Merritt Rowing Club currently operates boating programs from the boathouse which currently houses the offices of the Office of Parks and Recreation; these boating activities should continue from this building. The Rowing Club should not be moved from this location; better to allow the Rowing Club to expand and have Parks and Recreation move their offices to the vicinity of City Hall. Building a new boathouse on the Lake--in order to allow Parks and Rec to expand into facilities currently used by Rowing Club--is not a good idea.

Feeling was strong on this issue. Many present did not want to see new buildings at the Lake; one person said it would "be the ultimate in bureaucracy" to require the funding of a new boathouse in order to allow Parks and Rec to keep and expand the current headquarters.

3. No bridges should be built at Lake--including pedestrian bridge discussed in slide show--because boating should be top priority at the Lake. Lake is perceived as being too small for most boating as is.
4. Restaurants in park: Park Place Restaurant is too isolated from where people work; any new restaurants associated with park should be nearer to workplaces.
5. If new boathouse must be built, it must be right on the Lake and security must be provided on the dock.

6. More park is desirable; not more buildings. If new uses for buildings are required, renovate existing buildings.
7. The Lake Merritt Planning District identified by the CAT Team absolutely must include the streets bordering on the Lake and its parks (note that this point was to clarify limit of study areas; in fact the study areas identified does include surrounding streets and built edges).
8. Office of Parks and Recreation is overly concerned with recreation; not concerned enough with park open space--multi-use or passive parkland.
9. High-rise development northwest of Lake (Lake Merritt Towers Site, etc.) should be stopped.
10. The existing downtown public shuttle should be extended to weekends to improve public transit to Lake. Also public awareness of existence of this transit needs to be improved.
11. Security must be beefed up, especially to facilitate night-time use of Lake and its parks.
12. Security parking at Garden Center is a high priority: need roughly 20 safe parking spaces. One person thought these spaces should be fenced off for extra security; another thought improved site lighting would be sufficient.
13. Too much of the Lake borders is devoted to all-day parking for city employees; especially the parking lot adjacent to Parks headquarters. Limits should be placed on quantity of free, all-day parking spaces.
14. Too many (city officials') cars are parked inside the park on parkland. This problem could be solved by moving the Parks office to City Hall.
15. Too many city employees drive their cars on park service roads.
16. The parking lot at the (Adams Point) boathouse is too big--some people felt that one half of its parking spaces could be removed; others said that lots of parking is needed for night-time functions at the boathouse.

17. Park should be primarily for grass and trees, not highly organized activities or additions to the existing park character.
18. Park should be made available to dogs: disagreement on this issue due to dogs' potential interference with wildlife refuge.

B. Discussion focused on specific proposals of the CAT Team resulted in the following points. Consensus on some (not all) of the points is noted, as follows:

1. The Lake should not receive any fill to mitigate narrow park borders or for any other reasons; this would impede its role as a wildlife refuge which should take precedence over other concerns. Unanimous opposition to any filling of the lake was recorded by a show of hands.
2. Water level: lake should be made deeper to solve problem of algae and wedgin grass. Raising the lake level is a good idea. One person noted that Alameda County Flood Control District tries to restrict use of pumps to save energy. As a result, lake level is left dangerously low for fish and wildlife.

Note: the person who made this assertion about the SCFCD had recently corresponded with Don Perata, head of the District.

3. Wildlife Refuge and Rotary Science Center: Caged animals should be released or moved to sanctuaries. Several of the birds and animals in the cages have been shot at--they are not safe there, particularly at night.
4. Rotary Science Center should be turned into an interpretive center.
5. Bird Island improvements must be done carefully so as not to disturb the birds.
6. Provision for fresh water on bird islands should be re-evaluated to determine if it is appropriate for role of islands a bird refuges on the Pacific Flyway.

7. Eighteenth Street Boat Landing: pipe rails between portions of the concrete balustrades should be removed to improve access to boat landing. (This was offered as an alternative solution to filling the cove to create a wider park border).
8. Signage: too much emphasis on signage was made in the slide show; park should not have too many signs.
9. Traffic re-routing: any traffic changes must be very carefully studied. The Gas Tax Bill (SB #300) is a potential source of funding for financing traffic changes, at least if it can be demonstrated that such changes will remove or reduce existing bottlenecks.
10. Lid Park over Twelfth Street is a good idea but it should be planned entirely as a park; don't use it for shops or restaurants.
11. Lid Park design--whatever design solution is proposed--should not block the arches of the Kaiser Convention Center.
12. Lid Park concept was considered worthy of further study according to a vote by a show of hands. A significant minority thought the concept should not be considered further, due to its expense and overengineered approach to solving the Twelfth Street park edge problem. Some felt the site proposed for the Lid Park is too small an area to be a worthwhile candidate for a lid park.
13. Existing decaying bulkhead walls should be replaced wherever necessary.
14. Measure AA Funds should be used for security, lighting, and upgrading amenities already present at park; not for major new projects such as the Lid Park.
15. Bike lane: best to design so as to locate bike lane in the park; second choice is for bike lane in street.
16. Children's Fairyland should be retained as a fantasy park for very young children. As to improving it, ask children what they want at Fairyland that is not already there.

17. Bikeway connection to Estuary: not feasible to try to acquire railroad tracks as park property but an on-grade safe crossing is desirable.
18. Children's Fairyland should not be enlarged further at the expense of surrounding open space or parkland. Should be kept exactly as it is; no changes. Keep it as a story theme park--it has a good small town feel which is exactly the right scale for kids. Don't change a thing about it. (There appeared to be a virtually unanimous consensus on this).

List of Participants, Fifth of Five Public Workshops,
5/21/89

Name	Affiliation and/or Address
Gary Fry	
Peg Lynch	OCT
Ted Malley	OCT
Dee Duffy	OCT
John A Russo & Stephanie Shikofsky	Oakland/Berkeley Rainbow Coalition & Adams Pt. Pres. District (running for council)
Bill Halsey	OCT
Barbara Campbell	Board Lakeside Garden Center (Amer Rhodo
Fleming L. Pope & Mary Lou Pope	Board Lakeside Garden Center Golden State Lily Society; 49 Dudley Ct; Piedmont, CA 94911
Bob Brown	Sydney B. Mitchell Society
Jean Brown	East Bay Garden Board
Charles A. Russell	East Bay Dahlia Society and Oakland-East Bay Garden Center
Ellen Being	Wildlife Refuge Task Force; 750 Rana Avenue; Oakland, CA 94610
James Lerada	Adams Point, Friends of Refuge, Sierra Club
Joy and Paul Bloyd	Lake Merritt Appreciators - Sierra Club
Marian Fleming, M.D.	East Bay Garden Center Board
Harold Cloer (President)	Oakland-East Bay Garden Center
Bill Turner	APPS-Adams Pt.

List of Participants, Fifth of Five Public Workshops,
5/21/89 (Cont'd)

Name	Affiliation and/or Address
Winnie Gallagher	
Victor Rubin	University-Oakland Forum
Paul McArdle	Concerned Citizen
Karen McArdle	Lake Merritt CAT Steering Committee
Franz Steiner	LMRC
Philip Grubstick	City of Oakland OPU
Nancy Rieser	Citizen (interested wildlife refuge); 437 Euclid #10; Oakland, CA 94610
Nance & Evan Webb	303 Adams St. #404; Oakland, CA

4.6 PRESENTATION TO THE OAKLAND DESIGN ADVOCATES

Date: December 14, 1988

Place: Oakland AIA Headquarters, 499 14th Street

Present (among others): Kerry Daane-Loux, President, Northern California Chapter, American Society of Landscape Architects; Steve Costa, City Assets Committee; Chris Pattillo, Chairman, Oakland Design Advocates and member, CAT Design/Technical Advisory Committee; Bill Hull, Partner, Amphion Environmental, Inc.; David Hobstetter, Architect, Kaplan MacLaughlin Diaz; Nancy Bardach, Landscape Architect, Amphion Environmental, Inc.

- A. Preliminary version of the slide presentation was received favorably by the Oakland Design Advocates who later furnished a letter of endorsement. The following comments by this group of architects, planners and designers are worthy of note:
1. Parking is a very important issue. A master planning process must address both how to increase parking and how to replace parking that is removed by implementation of proposed improvements.
 2. one approach to solving the parking problem is to extend the hours of use of existing parking lots and garages, such as at the Oakland Museum and Kaiser Convention Center after the hours of institutional use. This extended use of existing parking spaces could be dubbed "double use" or "multiple use" of parking.
 3. Traffic modifications: why not eliminate some of the one-way lanes on Lakeside Drive to extend park borders along Lakeside?
 4. As an alternative to the proposed lid park for Twelfth Street why not "scale back" the existing expressway and return it to being an ordinary, on-grade city street, designed as a boulevard with an esplanade along the Lake edge? This would be more feasible, easier to build and less expensive than the lid park. (Note: this approach has its own set of problems: see "Traffic Modifications" discussion.)

5. The isolated bus stop along Twelfth Street Expressway is unsafe for pedestrians to get to and use, so the principle of separation of transit lanes and traffic intended by Twelfth Street's engineers has not worked.
6. Why not move the (Adams Point) boathouse out of the vicinity of the wildlife refuge and onto one of the opposite lake edges?
7. One of the major amenities of the area is the large number of restaurants of all budgets and cuisines within one block of Lakeside Park.
8. A jet at the south end of the lake would be an excellent feature of a master plan. Another related idea would be to build a water feature as part of the Twelfth Street Lid Park. Water could be pumped from the Estuary to serve the jet and/or fountain. Sea water would need to be treated if the fountain was in close contact with the public.
9. Precedent for an on-grade crossing across railroad tracks (between the Channel and the Estuary) exists at Jack London Square.
10. The existing sculpture garden could be extended up around the Lake as part of a 1 1/2% for art program being proposed by the City Council. However, setting criteria for what art pieces are appropriate and which are not is very difficult. Strict criteria and clear guidelines are essential.
11. There is an opportunity to utilize Channel Park as an extension or annex area for the ever-expanding Festival-at-the Lake.
12. A Public Art Plan for the Channel Park Area is needed as the next step after passage of the 1 1/2% for art program.

4.7 PRESENTATION TO THE "ARTS PLAZA COMMITTEE" OF THE OAKLAND STRATEGIC PLAN FOR CULTURAL DEVELOPMENT

Date: May 25, 1989

Place: Oakland AIA Headquarters, 499 14th Street

The slide presentation was received with compliments and appreciation by the Plaza Committee. The following comments made by committee members are worthy of note:

1. Three City Council Districts divide up Lake Merritt; not two as reported by the CAT Team. The third district is that of Wilson Riles.
2. The "Bay Trail" that is in the planning stages to connect all the waterfront communities ringing San Francisco Bay can and should connect to the trail loop around Lake Merritt. (Note that this concept was emphasized at a subsequent presentation made to the Cultural Services Committee of the Oakland City Council on June 6, 1989, regarding the Bay Trail). A "cultural trail" incorporating the existing sculpture garden could be integrated with the Bay Trail, which could reach in from the Estuary and "embrace" Lake Merritt.
3. Parking is a major consideration. Any plan for Lake Merritt should ensure that there is enough parking for all existing and potential users.
4. Masonry bulkhead walls are vulnerable to dredging equipment, as reported by the CAT Team. But more substantial, solid walls could be created which would be invulnerable to the equipment. (The question of whether dredging equipment could be damaged against these improved walls was not addressed).
5. Lake level: pumping to create an artificially raised lake level as proposed by the CAT Team is technically possible but must be paid for by another agency, other than the Alameda County Flood Control Agency. ACPCA's sole purpose is flood control, so power and staffing for regular pumping operations could not be provided within its operating framework.

6. An alternative to a Twelfth Street Lid Park would be to remove the Kaiser Convention Center parking lot to make way for a southern arm of the Lake, south of Twelfth Street. Twelfth Street could be reorganized (in its existing location) as a bridge across the Lake, which it was originally when the "Twelfth Street Bridge" was first built. This concept would enlarge the Lake and make Twelfth Street a scenic drive (The parking issue was not addressed).

5.0 Planning Recommendations

5.1 PLANNING RECOMMENDATIONS

The overall recommendation of the Lake Merritt CAT Project is that the City of Oakland create a special planning district for Lake Merritt Park and undertake a master planning process for the park. This special planning district could potentially open up State funding sources not currently available to Oakland.

The following items constitute the specific planning recommendations of the Lake Merritt "CAT" Project for the future of Lake Merritt. These recommendations have been divided into three categories: Proposals for Immediate Implementation; Proposals for Early Implementation following further planning studies; and Proposals for Long-Range Implementation following in-depth feasibility studies. More in-depth discussion of some of the planning issues is provided - See items 5.2 to 5.11 below.

A. Proposals for Immediate Implementation may require further planning studies; however, these studies need not involve significant public debate and could probably be undertaken internally by city staff.

1. Improved safety and security should be achieved by:
 - a. Increased police and ranger patrols.
 - b. additional site lighting, especially in Lakeside Park, to encourage night-time use of existing facilities such as the Garden Center.
 - c. clean-up police surveillance, and enhanced lighting at existing pedestrian underpasses.
2. A long-term master plan should be prepared for the reforestation of the parks surrounding Lake Merritt, especially with a view to replacing mature and declining tree specimens that have a limited remaining lifespan.
 - a. in conjunction with a new planting master plan, design a new automatic irrigation system for all park areas to replace the existing archaic and malfunctioning hydraulic system.
 - b. Prepare a park maintenance plan to accompany the long-term planting plan.

3. Improved park maintenance and gardening should be implemented, especially at key park locations such as park entries and park gateways (See #4 below).
4. Park gateways should be planned, designed and planted for the major intersections leading into the Lake Merritt Study Area. These Park Gateways should employ park signage, lush planting and intensive, regular park maintenance to set the image of a central park precinct for downtown Oakland.
5. Existing medians at the major streets bordering the Lake should be planted with annual flowers, ground covers, shrubs and street trees to reinforce the image of a major central Oakland park precinct extending beyond actual city park borders. These "green medians" should act as parkways or boulevards leading to the "Park Gateways" which in turn function as entries to the actual useable parklands comprising Lake Merritt Park.
6. Erosion on steep Lake banks should be mitigated by new erosion-control planting.
7. Extensive quantities of new sand should be brought in regularly to replenish Lake beaches, at the Bandstand and south shores, etc.
8. Park signage should be re-designed to provide a distinct, readable, and highly identifiable image to the Lake Merritt Park. This signage should provide more information than is currently communicated by existing signs, indicating:
 - a. pedestrian trails and bikeways.
 - b. direction to boathouse(s).
 - c. direction to surrounding amenities, including Oakland Museum, Kaiser Convention Center, Laney College, Kaiser Center, War Memorial Building, Kaiser Roof Garden, Downtown Oakland Shopping District, and Grand Avenue and Lakeshore shopping districts.

- d. direction to amenities within Lakeside Park, including Garden Center, Lawn Bowling Club, Rotary Science Center, Children's Fairyland, etc.

If the quantity of information required for the signs is too great, kiosks at key points such as the Bellevue Drive entrance to Lakeside Park should be established to provide this information.

9. At least one half of the existing parking lot by the boathouse should be repaved in a turf paving system.
10. The fountain in the minipark at Grand Avenue and Lake Park should be restored and filled, incorporating ornamental jets.

B. Proposals for Early Implementation following further planning studies will require additional public input and city staff review to insure that they benefit the maximum number of potential park users and nearby residents:

1. A bikeway loop system around the Lake should be planned, designed and built, utilizing both vehicular bike lanes in streets and special cross-park routes where space permits. This bikeway loop should be connected across Twelfth Street to Channel Park. (See bikeway discussion).
2. A bikeway and pedestrian link should be established to link Channel Park with Estuary Park. In accomplishing this link, Oakland's portion of the Bay Trail planned for all of the waterfront cities of the Bay Area could be viewed as embracing or ringing Lake Merritt. The Channel-to-Estuary link should be accomplished by one of the following methods:
 - a. (preferred): on-grade crossing across both sets of railroad tracks which currently separate Estuary Park from Channel Park.
 - b. structured overpass crossing designed to accommodate wheelchair access as well as bicyclists and pedestrians.

- c. clearly indicated bike lane in street proceeding from the south end of Channel Park, down the Fourth Street cul-de-sac by Laney College Ceramics studio to Oak Street and down Oak Street to Estuary Park.
- 3. The existing pedestrian trail system should be improved, with clear delineation of paved walkway and soft jogging paths. Eroded pathways created by informal public use should be converted into permanent walkways and/or jogging trails.
- 4. The Lake should be better integrated with surrounding parks (such as Athol Plaza and Kaiser Roof Garden) and urban amenities (such as the Oakland Museum, Kaiser Convention Center, Courthouse, Central Library and Laney College). This integration can be achieved by improved bike and pedestrian networks (see 1, 2 and 3 above) and pedestrian street crossings.
- 5. Narrow lake borders should be widened by one or more of the following methods: (see "Traffic Modifications," "Parking" and "Landfill" discussion below).
 - a. remove on-street parking on lake side of Lakeshore Drive, Lakeview Drive and Harrison Street.
 - b. modify Lakeshore Drive to a one-way or limited two-way street.
 - c. fill lake edges to a limited extent at the Eighteenth Street cove, Lakeshore Drive south of Eighteenth Street and Harrison Street arm.
- 6. Decaying bulkhead walls surrounding the Lake should be restored and/or re-built. Where the existing bulkheads are canted at 45 degrees, they should be rebuilt vertically to provide additional space for park trails and bikeways. (Bulkhead walls could be installed at some locations with lower top elevations, closer to the water level).

7. Public transportation to and around Lake should be improved in one or more of the following ways:
 - a. create mini-bus loop system around the Lake, utilizing proposed parking lots at opposite ends of Lake and tying into existing AC Transit and bus stops and BART stations.
 - b. create boat transit across the Lake, north and south and east to west, utilizing boats similar to the "Mississippi Queen." Boat transit should be tied into the proposed mini-bus system, and/or existing or enhanced AC Transit routes.
8. Parking should be reorganized by shifting emphasis from limited on-street spaces ringing the Lake to key "magnet" parking lots located at opposite ends of the Lake (see "Traffic Modifications and Parking" discussion in this report). Parking can be accommodated by using existing under-used parking facilities and providing for new facilities.
9. A master plan should be created to redesign the wildlife refuge, remove injured animal cages, and create a more natural environment providing both improved bird habitat and interpretive trail for human use.
10. The Rotary Science Center should be removed or its programs should be reorganized around the twin themes of "Wildlife at Lake Merritt" and "Migratory Routes: the Pacific Flyway".
11. Blocked vistas to the Lake from downtown and surrounding neighborhoods should be opened up wherever possible.
12. Design guidelines for existing park building renovations, new park buildings, and new site furnishings should be established. Design guidelines should establish a readily identifiable "signature style" for all built elements at the park, making them recognizable as belonging specifically to Lake Merritt Park.

13. A Zoning ordinance should be passed severely limiting building heights all around the Lake, with much less severe restrictions applied to the northwest corner urban redevelopment area bounded by Grand and Harrison Streets.
14. Traffic modifications near the Lakeview Branch Library and El Embarcadero should be made to expand and connect the useable park spaces at this location. (see "Traffic Modifications" discussion below).
15. Feasibility of re-converting to boathouse use the Lakeside Drive Boathouse currently used as the Office of Parks and Recreation Headquarters should be studied.
16. Low landscape berms should be created on Lake borders wherever possible to screen traffic as viewed across the Lake.
17. Aerating jets should be installed behind the metal booms in the 2 arms of the Lake and increase frequency of litter collection in the Lake.
18. A floating pedestrian bridge should be installed over the Glen Echo arm of the lake to allow downtown residents to cross over to Lakeside Park.

C. Proposals for Long-Range Implementation following in-depth feasibility, planning, marketing and design studies will require public debate, interagency review, and extensive fundraising campaigns:

1. A Lid Park should be built over Twelfth Street, linking the Kaiser Convention Center, Oakland Museum and Alameda County Courthouse in one park campus "superblock." This superblock can function as a new cultural arts and civic center for the City of Oakland and can become the "Plaza for the Arts" proposed by the City's "Arts Plaza" Committee. (See "Twelfth Street Lid Park" discussion in this report).
 - a. the Lid Park should be built in a series of terraces stepping down from the Oakland Museum to the Lake Edge. These terraces, stylistically similar to the existing Oakland Museum, could be viewed as a Phase 2 extension of the Museum.

- b. in conjunction with the Lid Park, a tall jet (75 feet to 100 feet high) should be built in the Lake, at its south end.
 - c. the pedestrian and bicycle loop trail should link the existing lake edges with the new lid park, so that the "seam" or interface between the over-structure park and the existing on-grade park borders is not abrupt or obvious.
2. Public opinion polls should be taken every few years to determine the popularity of providing more active, innovative children's play exhibits at Children's Fairyland. These exhibits could continue to be oriented around the themes of fairytales or other children's stories, providing continuity in the transition from more passive to more active theme-oriented play at Children's Fairyland. (See "Children's Fairyland" discussion in this report).

5.2 CHILDREN'S FAIRYLAND

One of the original proposals of the CAT Team, intended to be tested in the public workshops, was the concept of improving Children's Fairyland by making it into a more active children's theme park. Currently, the exhibits are quite passive in nature, encouraging children's imagination without inviting their physical participation in a fantasy form of play. Nevertheless, there is a strong sentiment in the community, expressed most strongly by members of the Lake Merritt Breakfast Club, that Children's Fairyland should remain exactly the way it is. This attitude is borne partly out of nostalgia, since many friends and users of Lake Merritt were born or raised in Oakland and grew up with Children's Fairyland. It is also due to the inherent conservatism of some community groups. Perhaps more importantly, the attitude is the result of Fairyland's considerable success as a unique, creative attraction for children.

Since Fairyland has not changed significantly in nearly forty years, the CAT Team suggested reorganizing the park around a more active series of exhibits or play forms. This concept proved to be unpopular in the community; especially with the Breakfast Club. An interview with Jean Percey, Fairyland's director, held on May 13, 1989, suggests that a compromise approach, matching controlled change at the park with preservation of its original concept, may be the best policy. Here is a record of that interview:

Children's Fairyland, covering 10 1/2 acres, was originated by Mr. Navlet (of Navlet's Nursery); not, as some think, by William Penn Mott. It was intended to serve children from age 1 to 10; some eleven-year-olds begin to get bored by the exhibits. Opening in 1950, five years before Disneyland opened in 1955, it provided one of the main inspirations to Walt Disney in developing his concept for Disneyland. Children's Fairyland is controlled financially by the Parks and Recreation Commission, traditionally a conservative group which has opposed changes or new directions for it. The Lake Merritt Breakfast Club is one of many financial contributors to Fairyland.

Ms. Percey thinks that some of the exhibits should be redone because they are either boring or dangerous, witness "Thumbelina Tunnel" which has flooded on more than one occasion. Her opinion is that all exhibits at Children's Fairyland should be on a storybook theme; this theme, however, could expand from being based exclusively on fairytales to including a

broader base of children's story themes. She believes that some more active play areas within Fairyland would be an excellent contribution to the park as long as these play areas are organized around story themes. In particular, she would like to add a carousel to Fairyland and would like to see it located at "Yankee Doodle Junction" within the fenced border of Children's Fairyland.

The CAT Team's concept of raising ticket prices to help finance other proposed improvements to the "Lake Merritt Park" would not be a good idea since many people believe Fairyland should have free admission. There has even been resistance to the concept of raising money for Fairyland by selling T-shirts and other souvenirs. It has always been a recreation spot for people of all income levels and should not become the exclusive amenity of the wealthy.

Expansion or additional publicity for Children's Fairyland could be difficult to achieve since parking is already a major problem for the park.

5.3 WATER APPEARANCE AND WATER LEVEL

The persistent problems of algae colonies and widgeon grass growth at the shallow lake edges evades solution by dredging since dredging equipment can be damaged by contact with the concrete and stone bulkhead walls ringing the lake and in turn portions of these walls could potentially be undermined by the dredging equipment. But there is an alternative to eradicating algae and other plant growth by dredging. A weed-free lake is partially a function of water depth since plant life flourishes in shallow areas where light easily penetrates to the bottom. Currently, water depths along the lake borders are so shallow as to expose the lake bottom during the lowest tidal levels. (The other function encouraging weed and algae growth is warm water temperatures).

Increasing water depths to impede light penetration to the bottom can be achieved not only by dredging, but also by raising the water level artificially at the Seventh Street Pump Station. It is our understanding based on conversations with Dr. Shelly Sack of the Alameda County Flood Control Agency and Mr. Peter Mangarella of Woodward and Clyde, hydraulic engineers, that the tidal gates at the Seventh Street Pump Station are typically left open, allowing natural Bay tidal cycles to set the water level at the Lake. Since the extremes of tidal variation observed at the Golden Gate Bridge tend to dissipate along the Oakland channel and in the Lake due to friction, natural tidal variation at Lake Merritt is (at approximately two feet) much less dramatic than along ocean beaches.

The natural tidal pattern in the Lake is interrupted when the Alameda County Flood Control Agency determines that the lake level should be drawn down in anticipation of a winter flood. On these occasions, the lake level is lowered by pumping water out in to the Bay; then the tidal gates are closed against the next incoming tide, allowing the Lake to become a reservoir for freshwater runoff from its considerable watershed. In addition, the Agency pumps the water level up and temporarily shuts the tidal gates to contain a higher water level a few times per year to facilitate boating events on the Lake.

The slide presentation produced by the Lake Merritt CAT Team demonstrates the visual and aesthetic benefits of the higher water level achieved during natural high tides and by pumping for special occasions. Storm drain pipes entering the Lake which are visible at low tides become invisible and the portions of the lake bottom which are occasionally exposed disappear. Furthermore, the higher

water line is much more aesthetically pleasing when viewed against the beaches and rims of the bulkhead walls.

The CAT Project Steering Committee investigated the feasibility of raising the lake level artificially. Since the pumps at the Seventh Street Pump Station were designed to set the lake level at any desired elevation, there is no mechanical reason why the pumps could not be used to raise the water level regularly; perhaps as often as once per each tidal cycle. Recirculation could potentially be achieved by opening the tidal gates to flush the Lake after the (higher) desired lake level is achieved.

However, while the concept of raising the lake level artificially is appealing, it turns out to be impractical and the action of the pumps could disrupt fish populations since there is some evidence that the pumps' noise scares fish.

Regular pumping to raise the Lake level artificially, perhaps as often as once per each tidal cycle, has the following disadvantages:

1. Natural tidal variations would be disrupted, which could have potentially adverse impact on marine life.
2. There is evidence that the noise of pumps could scare off fish.
3. Cost of staffing pump station and maintaining pumps under constant use would be prohibitive: the proposal is highly energy intensive.
4. Evidence of tests performed as part of the 1982 "Lake Merritt Restoration Project" suggests that "power flushing" would not be advantageous in discouraging algae growth since it would result in increased light penetration to the bottom.
5. There is no long-term advantage to pumping the water level up less often than once per tidal cycle since the lake drains back to its normal level in about six hours.

An alternate solution to the problems of weed and algae growth presents itself and would also allow for simulating the appearance of a higher water level. New bulkhead walls could be built to replace the existing walls. Designed to be strong enough to withstand dredging against them, the new bulkhead walls could be installed with their top elevation six inches to a foot lower than the existing walls. As a result, the natural lake level would appear to be higher when seen against the walls. However, where

the lake banks are already steep, the walls could be installed to the current elevations.

While this proposal may be expensive to implement, many of the bulkhead walls ringing the lake are in a decrepit condition and need replacing anyway. The replacement could take place by a few hundred feet at a time as permitted by budgets or funds raised. Visible obstructions such as the exposed storm drain pipes could be manually lowered or removed.

The related recommendation that a 75' to 100' high ornamental jet be installed at the south end of the Lake near the Oakland Museum is primarily for visual impact because one jet by itself will not improve aeration of the waters throughout the Lake; only a complex system of under-water aeration pipes and jets would achieve this purpose.

An additional jet should be installed behind the trash enclosure metal boom at the Trestle Glen arm by the El Embarcadero pergola. This aerating jet would serve to alleviate oxygen depletion caused by decaying leaves and other organic material deposited by the storm drain inlet at this location. A similar jet could be placed behind the metal boom in the Glen Echo arm.

The litter problem at the Lake should be managed by daily clean-ups--an increase over the existing practice of collecting litter every other day.

Concurrently, we recommend that studies continue to be made to determine if any highly adaptable aquatic plants could be employed at the Lake borders to out-compete the algae and widgeon grass. Such a plant species would have to withstand both changes in tidal level and changes in salinity. One possible solution is to introduce marsh plants such as pickleweed (*salicornia* species) where the lake borders are close to water level, such as at the existing beach areas. Since it is likely that litter would collect in these aquatic or salt marsh plants, the species must also be one which will allow for relative ease of litter removal.

5.4 WILDLIFE REFUGE, BIRD ISLANDS AND ROTARY SCIENCE CENTER

The CAT Team recommends that a master plan be drawn up for the wildlife refuge with the goal of creating enhanced bird habitat and more natural viewing areas for people. The "urban zoo" of cages should be removed to make way for a carefully designed and planted bird habitat. We endorse the recommended actions of the Wildlife Refuge Task Force, but add to them this additional recommendation that a master plan (within the larger Lake Merritt Park master plan we are calling for) be produced, with the possibility of continuing the planning process right into design drawings.

As pointed out by the Wildlife Refuge Task Force, the bird islands need rehabilitation. The Rotary Science Center building could be completely removed. If it stays, it should be converted to a well-organized exhibition based on the twin themes of "Migration" Pacific Flyway" and "Wildlife of Lake Merritt Park."

As part of the master planning process, the need for a freshwater duck pond should be analyzed. If a pond is considered to be an important element for the Refuge, the existing pond should be removed and a new one with natural edges and aquatic plants should be built.

5.5 TWELFTH STREET LID PARK

A Lid Park, that is a park structure built over Twelfth Street to link the Oakland Museum and Kaiser Convention Center with the Lake edge, was proposed at least as long ago as the 1966 Oakland General Plan and has been endorsed by William Penn Mott, former Director of Oakland Parks and Recreation and outgoing Director of the National Park Service. It is a concept that could well serve the related goals of the "Plaza for the Arts" Committee of Oakland's current Strategic Plan for Cultural Development.

The concept would be to create a superblock campus uniting the Oakland Museum, Kaiser Convention Center and the Alameda County Courthouse with the lake edge by building a new park over the existing Twelfth Street Expressway. The Expressway already contains a tunnel at Eleventh Street, so the lid park would extend past efforts to carry traffic underneath civic and cultural buildings and land uses. By including the Courthouse in the superblock, the Lid Park could be regarded as a new Civic Center for Oakland, not just a cultural arts center.

One major advantage for building a lid park rather than rebuilding Twelfth Street as an on-grade urban boulevard with a tree-lined pedestrian esplanade at the lake edge is that the existing, highly efficient expressway has been engineered to handle large volumes of traffic not currently seen on this street. Twelfth Street as it currently exists is a traffic resource able to accommodate twenty years of anticipated traffic growth. This advantage - the existing infrastructure of tunnels and overpasses - would be lost if the street were converted to a boulevard of only four lanes in each direction.

The lid park would require a detailed master plan involving input from urban planners, urban designers, traffic engineers and civil engineers. The bus route would have to be re-thought, with the two options of either providing bus service across the Lid Park structure or re-routing bus service to Tenth Street. A challenging engineering problem is posed by the probable need to lower the existing overpass which carries westbound traffic to the portion of Twelfth Street west of Lakeside Drive.

Another challenge is to lower all of the roadways sufficiently to allow the lid park to engage the lake edge at a point no higher than the existing sidewalk, since any higher point would mean building a massive wall down from the lid to the water level. Such a wall would defeat the purpose of bringing people into more intimate contact with the lake edge at its south side, actually making the lake edge condition worse than it is today. Yet lowering the roadway to permit the lake edge to remain at its current elevation (the existing sidewalk) will mean careful study so as to realign the road without blocking the existing tidal access passages under Twelfth Street.

The model for the Twelfth Street Lid Park can be seen in Seattle's Freeway Park and its extension to the Washington State Convention Center which were built over the Seattle Freeway. Both the mid-1970's Freeway Park and the recently completed Convention Center have been a great success. Designed by the Bay Area's Lawrence Halprin and Angela Danadjieva, the Freeway Park and Park Extension were engineered so as to support mature trees over the structure. Only in the last couple of years has the Seattle Parks Department sought to cut down some of the trees since their weight is becoming too much for the structure. However, eliminating some of the trees should have a desirable effect since the first-phase Freeway Park has become so shady with over-arching trees that few sunny pockets remain.

111

The design of the Oakland Museum, itself a series of roof terraces built in a style not dissimilar to Freeway Park, provides the opportunity to extend the museum in a series of similar terraces descending toward the lake edge. This could be considered as the ultimate or build-out phase of the Oakland Museum and could be carefully designed so as to blend almost seamlessly with the existing, first-phase Oakland Museum. In this way, the Museum could be extended literally to house the "Arts Plaza" or proposed cultural arts center, both in terms of expanded architectural space and expanded rooftop park open space.

5.6 PROPOSED TRAFFIC MODIFICATIONS

One of the main goals of the Lake Merritt CAT Team is to mitigate the extremely narrow landscaped lake borders, which in many cases are as narrow as thirty feet. Three possible ways of widening the borders present themselves:

1. Minimal modifications to remove the on-street parking lanes in order to create a permanent bicycle lane in the street or an extended sidewalk/park border out into the lane.
2. Significant traffic modifications to eliminate traffic lanes.
3. Lake landfill in certain designated locations to extend the park border out into the lake (see "Pros and Cons of Filling," below).

Whichever method is chosen, low landscape berms should be created on the lake border parkland to hide views of the traffic as seen across the lake.

In discussion with Ken Ryan, traffic planner, the following traffic modification options could be employed to allow for expanding the narrow park borders in order to create more useable park space.

- A. Lakeshore Drive, north of Eighteenth Street (currently has 6 lanes, 3 in each direction, of which 2 are used for parking):

- * Option 1: turn Lakeshore into a high-speed, one-way southbound street with 2 traffic lanes and 1 parking lane on the east or built side. Three lanes would be made available for park expansion. Northbound traffic would be diverted to Park and MacArthur Boulevards.

- * Option 2: turn Lakeshore into a 2-way, low speed road marked for "local access only." Through traffic between Grand Avenue and Eighteenth Street would be diverted to MacArthur Boulevard and Park Boulevard. With one lane preserved in each direction, plus one parking lane on the east or built side, three lanes would be made available for park expansion. In order to emphasize that Lakeshore Avenue belongs to Lake Merritt Park, special paving could be employed to give the street the look of a pedestrian mall.
- * Option 3 (minimal change): eliminate the parking lane on the park side thereby gaining one lane for park expansion.

B. Lakeshore Drive, south of Eighteenth Street
(Currently has 6 lanes, 3 in each direction, of which 2 are used for parking).

- * Option 1: form a cul-de-sac at Twelfth Street, re-routing all through traffic to First Avenue. One lane in each direction would be retained along with the parking lane on the east or built side. Three lanes would be made available for park expansion. Since First Avenue is well connected to the Twelfth Street Expressway, traffic flow should not be impeded by the Lakeshore Avenue cul-de-sac.
- * Option 2: turn Lakeshore into a one-way southbound street, leaving 2 traffic lanes and one parking lane open on the east side of the street. Three lanes would be gained for park expansion. Northbound traffic would be re-routed to First Avenue.
- * Option 3 (minimal change): eliminate the parking lane on the park side plus one lane of traffic, thereby gaining 2 lanes for park expansion.

C. Twelfth Street (currently has 12 lanes, 6 in each direction, plus a separate bus lane east bound, isolated from the other lanes). The street is engineered as an expressway, with over and under crossings to separate both directions of traffic flow. The expressway design allows 12th Street to be the major conduit into and out of downtown Oakland to the east.

- * Option 1: lower Twelfth Street and run a 12-lane expressway under a new Twelfth Street Lid Park (see discussion of Twelfth Street Lid Park above).

- * Option 2: turn Twelfth Street into an eight-lane on-grade boulevard with 4 lanes in each direction. Reclaim the remaining 4 lanes of traffic for park expansion to create a lakeside pedestrian esplanade.

Note that the disadvantage of this option is that it does not allow for anticipated traffic expansion in the next 20 years as does the current, 12-lane street. Capacity would be cut, impacting traffic throughout the downtown and San Antonio districts.

D. Lakeside Drive (currently has 4 lanes of traffic, 2 in each direction and has 2 additional parking lanes through most of its length). There is little need to modify Lakeside Drive south of 17th Street since the width of the park borders in this area is adequate. However, from the bend north of 17th Street up to the junction with Harrison Street, the option to eliminate a short row of parking spaces should be taken in order to mitigate one of the narrowest park borders around the Lake.

E. Harrison Street has recently been widened in anticipation of the greater capacity generated by the Lake Merritt Towers Development at Harrison and Grand Avenue. Unfortunately, this expansion did not allow for incorporation of a bike lane. A bike lane could be added in one of the following ways:

- * Option 1: try to restripe Harrison Street in order to add a bike lane.

- * Option 2: provide a bike lane along the lake edge, either by widening the existing walkway by cantilevering out over the Lake or by filling to extend the bulkhead wall outwards (see discussion on "Fill," below).
- * Option 3: bypass Harrison Street by building a pedestrian/bicycle bridge from 17th Street over to Lakeside Park.

F. Lakeview Branch, Oakland Public Library and Vicinity

The existing condition in this area is that the playing field east of the museum is separated from the lake border by three streets: the library access and parking street; the one-way connection from Lakeshore to Grand; and the one-way connection from Grand to Lakeshore. The following options would have the effect of integrating the playing field east of the Library and the traffic island between the 2 one-way streets with the lake border at the El Embarcadero pergola.

- * Option 1: if Lakeshore becomes one-way southbound, the connection between Grand and Lakeshore can be eliminated entirely, with traffic re-routed to MacArthur Boulevard as a connection between Grand and Lakeshore.
- * Option 2: if Lakeshore remains 2-way, eliminate the Grand to Lakeshore connection and retain the Lakeshore to Grand connection.
- * Option 3 (minimal change): provide a 4-lane, 2-way connection between Grand and Lakeshore by redesigning the existing connection to eliminate the existing wide separation and substitute a narrow median. This would provide a much wider park border at the El Embarcadero pergola without eliminating any existing traffic connections. It would also mitigate the existing traffic conflicts and confusion that occur as a result of 2 one-way streets separated by less than 100 feet.

A related option with all 3 of the above alternatives is to substitute a new parking lot and drop-off for the library accessed off of Lakeshore Drive, parallel to Lakeshore Drive. This revised parking lot might allow for an increased number of parking spaces.

- G. **Intersection of Grand and Lake Park Avenues:** the one-way turn off of Grand, heading toward Lakeshore, should be eliminated to increase the small park area containing the scalloped-edge fountain. This street has been temporarily closed in the past without any major problems. An additional possibility is to turn Lake Park into a one-way street, northbound. South (or east) bound traffic could use MacArthur Boulevard.

5.7 BIKEWAY

A key recommendation of the CAT Team is the creation of a one-way, clockwise bikeway loop around the Lake. Although a one-way bike system is unusual, it is warranted by conditions around the Lake, since creating a two-way system would require eliminating the parking lane on both sides of the streets ringing the Lake.

The position of the proposed loop bikeway depends largely on which of the above traffic modifications are selected. In general, the bikeway should be built through park areas wherever the borders are wide enough to permit this. Where the Lake borders are narrow, the bikeway should take the form of a bike lane in the street. One significant factor is that an in-street bike lane facilitates "serious" or commuter cyclists, while a bikeway through the park best serves "leisure cyclists" who do not mind sharing the path with pedestrians.

Assuming only minimal (if any) traffic modifications are made, the bikeway could be organized as follows:

1. **Lakeshore Drive from MacArthur to Eighteenth Street:** provide bike lane in street, utilizing existing parking lane on the park side.
2. **Lakeshore Drive from Eighteenth Street to Twelfth Street:** provide off-street bikeway through parkland on an expanded park border.
3. **Twelfth Street:** provide bikeway through the proposed lid park or along the proposed esplanade if the on-grade boulevard concept is selected in lieu of the lid park concept (see "Twelfth Street Lid Park" discussion).

4. **Twelfth Street, connection to Channel and Estuary:** provide a well-signed, safe and if possible above-ground connection between Twelfth Street and the existing Channel bike route. Provide a connection between the Channel and the Estuary in one of three ways:
 - a. (preferred): on-grade crossing over railroad tracks.
 - b. pedestrian/bike overpass over railroad tracks.
 - c. if the above 2 options prove to be unfeasible, provide a well-stripped, well-signed and street-tree planted bikeway connection over existing city streets by way of Fourth Street and Oak Street.
5. **Lakeside Drive:** provide off-street bikeway through the existing park border.
6. **Harrison Street:** (see above under Traffic Modifications "Harrison Street" discussion).
7. **Grand Avenue to Bellevue Drive:** provide off-street bikeway through existing parkland.
8. **Bellevue Drive:** provide signage indicating that the Bellevue Drive loop is a bike route.
9. **Grand Avenue east of Bellevue Drive:** provide off-street bikeway through existing parkland.
10. **Grand Avenue from MacArthur to Lake Park:** provide off-street bikeway through the parking lot under I-580 and through the small park with the scalloped-edge fountain.

Whatever the final bikeway configuration, good bikeway signage at all junctions and intersections is a top priority for both visibility and safety.

5.8 PARKING

Limited existing parking at Lake Merritt is already a problem which will be exacerbated by increased park use as development takes place and by removal of existing on-street parking spaces where necessary to make way for a bike lane in the street. While this study does not pretend to resolve the parking problems, the CAT Team recommends that the parking dilemma be approached by encouraging people to park at selected key "magnet" parking lots at several ends of the lake.

Existing parking lots and garages could be made available for park use on off hours. For example, the Oakland Museum parking garage could be made available for park users on days of museum closure and after museum hours. In addition, new parking lots could be built at key locations such as:

1. The vicinity of Grand and Harrison Streets.
2. Twelfth Street and Lakeside Drive.
3. Lakeshore Drive near MacArthur Boulevard.

In order to make this system work, improved public transit loop systems using mini-buses and possibly boats to take people from one end of the Lake to the other, would need to be implemented.

5.9 LANDFILL IN SELECTED PORTIONS OF THE LAKE: PROS AND CONS

One potential solution to the problem of the narrow existing lake borders is to extend the borders out into the Lake by building new bulkhead walls out in the Lake and filling behind them. The CAT Team has identified two key locations where filling has been brought up for public debate. The concept of filling is highly controversial and there were differences of opinion even on the Steering Committee as to whether filling is a good idea.

The two key locations where potential filling has been discussed are:

1. The gently curving cove area centered around the Eighteenth Street Boat Landing. Since the boat landing is the focus of some of the most intense pedestrian/bicycle congestion around the Lake, the shoreline around the cove could be extended out into the Lake and the boat landing could be moved out to meet the new shoreline. The gently curving line of the cove could be re-built in a configuration reaching a maximum width of thirty feet at its farthest extension out into the Lake.
2. The walkway along the Harrison Street Lake border could be extended by eight to ten feet out into the lake in order to provide a wider combined walkway/bikeway at one of the narrowest park borders around the Lake.

Following is a summary of the pros and cons for this concept of filling:

A. PROS:

1. Park borders could be extended without modifying existing traffic patterns. Any modifications to existing traffic patterns on Lakeshore and Harrison Streets could be opposed by some groups.
2. Little impact on fish and wildlife would be likely to result from such minor variations to the lake edge because both depend on quality habitat, not on a specific square footage of water area.

3. Reductions in the lake area resulting by the proposed fill could be balanced by cutting the lake edges back at other places, such as at Lakeside Park where the existing park borders are already more than adequate. In this way, the lake water acreage could remain exactly as it is today.
4. The concept was supported by some key city staff officials in the Office of Parks and Recreation and the Office of Public Works.

B. **CONS**

1. The concept was generally opposed by the public workshops.
2. The concept was opposed by several key members of the Steering Committee.
3. The concept was opposed by the influential Oakland Design Advocates group of East Bay architects, planners and landscape architects.
4. The opposing point may be made, why tamper with the lake edge when park borders can be extended by traffic modifications.
5. The Lake water acreage is an irretrievable natural resource. The original marsh has already been filled and the lake area decreased several times in the past. This resource should not be compromised.

5.10 PARK PRECINCT AND PARK GATEWAYS

One of the principal recommendations of the CAT Team is the concept of creating a "park precinct," or park district extending beyond the actual boundaries of the parks ringing the Lake. This park precinct could extend to embrace the many streets bordering on the Lake and continue on up the major streets which lead to the Lake. All of these streets should be conceived as boulevards, with street tree planting on both sides as well as in the medians (where medians exist). Grand Avenue is an example of a street that already has the appearance of a boulevard, yet boulevards could be created along Harrison Street north of Grand, along 27th Street and along Eighteenth Street east of the Lake, to name a few. Harrison Street south of Grand has already received tree planting in its medians, though street tree planting on both sides of Harrison has yet to be planned.

Greening the medians and planting street trees will do much to create the feel of a major park extending out and penetrating its urban surroundings. People driving down these streets, nearing Lake Merritt Park, will be aware that they are coming into a special district, marked by mature trees and flowering ground covers. Since the Lake is so intimately connected with downtown Oakland, this Lake Merritt Park Precinct can also be conceived as the Oakland City Center Precinct. Extensive street tree plantings along the downtown streets leading to the Lake will help bind city to park and will create the image of a Downtown Oakland/Lake Merritt district. Special light fixtures of a unified design, located in the medians of the streets which lead to Lake Merritt or along both sides of the road will create a design theme as closely "imageable" as belonging to Lake Merritt as the recently installed Necklace of Lights.

Many of the medians in the streets bordering on the Lake are unnecessarily paved with concrete and should be softened with plantings. The paved medians stem from a specific policy of the city parks maintenance staff, that maintenance of planted areas on narrow roadway medians is undesirable because of the inconvenience and potential danger of parks personnel crossing streets to access the medians. Yet it should not be necessary for maintenance personnel to access the medians more than a few times per year if a new, state-of-the-art automatic irrigation system is installed.

Related to the concept of a park precinct is the concept of park gateways. At the major intersections bordering on the Lake and its parks, such as Grand at Harrison, MacArthur at Lakeshore and Lakeshore at Eighteenth Street, intensive park maintenance to maintain brightly colored flower beds and rich green lawns, would signal that the visitor had proceeded past processional boulevards leading to the Lake itself. These park gateways should receive special signage indicating a welcome to Lake Merritt Park and description of regular and special park features and activities, with directions to them.

The main entrance to Lakeside Park at Bellevue Drive and Grand Avenue can be conceived as an inner park gateway, past the outer gateways at each of the major intersections around the Lake. In addition to new tree, shrub and flower planting, the Lakeside Park entry should be provided with an informational kiosk advising the public of all park events and features.

5.11 METHODS OF REVENUE GENERATION

An in-depth analysis of methods for financing the many improvements proposed by the CAT Team is beyond the scope of this study and should be a key component of an official, city-sponsored Lake master-planning process. Nevertheless, a few methods of generating revenues have been identified by the Team:

1. Issue new permanent permit concessions in Lakeside Park.
2. Plan for retail development as part of Twelfth Street Lid Park.
3. Set parking fees in existing and new parking garages and lots.
4. (Most importantly): require developer contributions to park amenities in return for development and building permits.

These methods of revenue generation are based on the underlying concept that an amenity-rich Lake Merritt Park environment at the edge of downtown Oakland can generate business for Oakland.

Appendices

WHAT'S IN LAKE MERRITT'S FUTURE?

The Lake Merritt Planning Project

Lake Merritt is Oakland's Central Park, yet it needs our guidance and care to continue this role in the future. At present there is no overall plan to guide the park's growth, improvement or maintenance. Without a plan, how will we deal with some of the pressing issues facing the Lake?

- o How could the Lake be more accessible to pedestrians from other public attractions such as the Museum, Convention Center, Downtown and Kaiser Center?
- o Will the Lake's existing paths accommodate increasing numbers of joggers, walkers and bicyclists?
- o What will happen when the park's many mature trees age and die? How will they be replaced?

While we enjoy the Lake today, we need to plan for its future. The Lake Merritt Planning Project is a team of local Landscape Architects who are donating their professional services as planners and designers to develop a plan for the Lake. The team will work with the community to identify the Lake's problems and explore ways to improve its image, size, useability, appearance and connections to surrounding amenities. The team will produce a schematic master plan describing a range of actions that should be taken to help the Lake to realize its full potential as Oakland's central urban open space.

The Lake Merritt Planning Project has been endorsed by the City of Oakland. It is sponsored by the American Society of Landscape Architects and the Environmental Design Foundation.

Get involved with the future of the Lake!

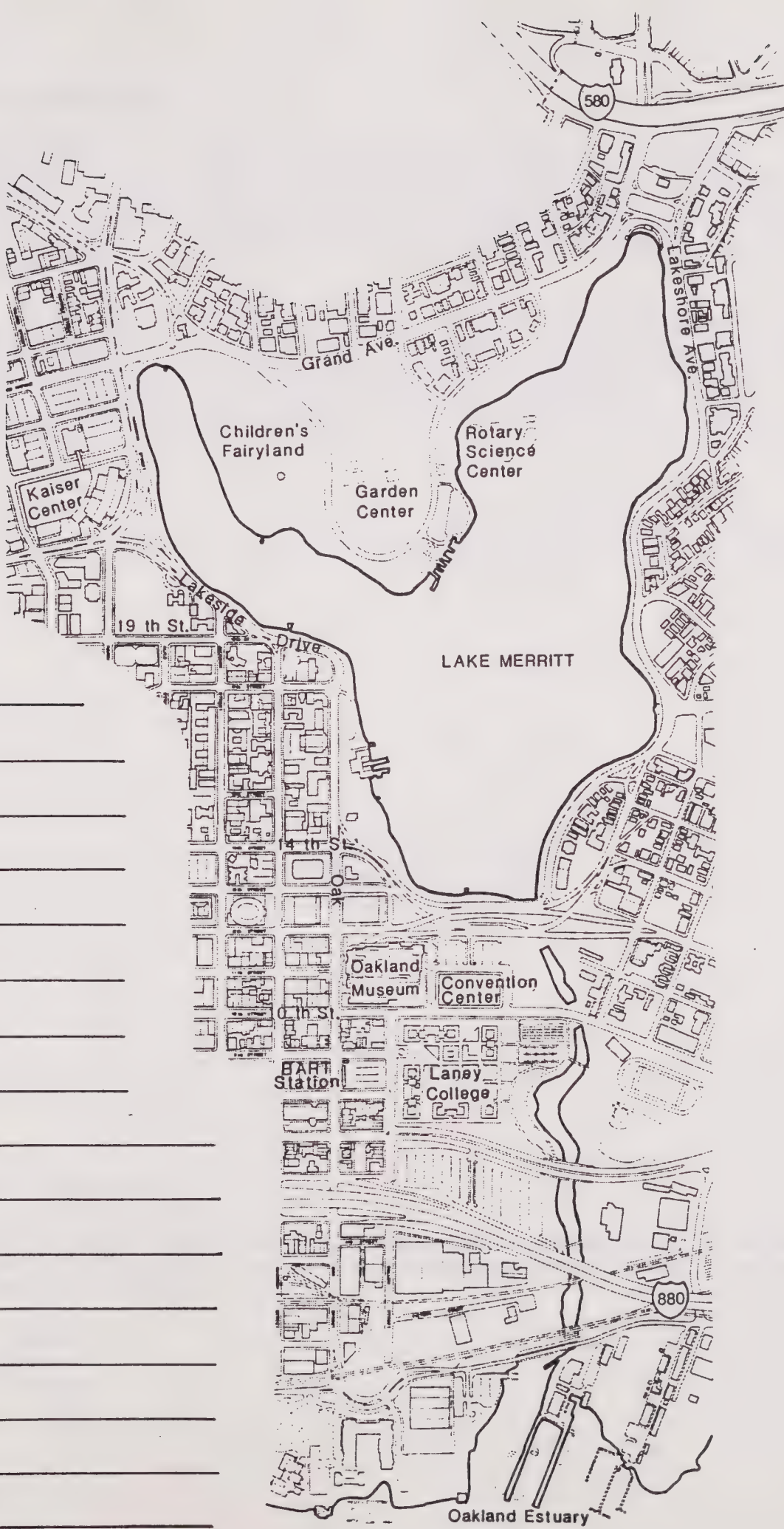
We need your ideas. Just turn the page . . .

What do you usually do and where do you go?

What are the best and the worst things about the Lake?

If there are specific areas that concern you, point them out on the map. Explain the problem. Then give us your ideas, if you have them, on what should be done.

Community and civic improvement projects



Project Background

The Lake Merritt Planning Project is a Community Assistance Team sponsored by the American Society of Landscape Architects (ASLA), the national organization representing the profession of landscape architecture in the United States and Canada. The ASLA, founded in 1899, is a non-profit organization which promotes planning and stewardship of the land. Headquartered in Washington, D.C., the Society currently has over 8500 members, and local chapters in all fifty states.

In 1985 the ASLA established the Community Assistance Team (CAT) program. The general purpose of the CAT is to provide a means by which Landscape Architects can offer their professional skills to the public, by addressing the needs of important community landscapes or regions. Professionals and students provide resource analysis, site planning, design and other professional services free of charge, leaving a legacy of service to the community.

FOLD

STAMP

**Lake Merritt Planning Project
Brooks Kolb, Chairman
377 Santa Clara, #106
Oakland, CA 94610**

FOLD

How to Keep in Touch

The Lake Merritt Planning Project will be holding public workshops later this summer. Leave us your name and address below if you would like to be informed of meetings and updated on our progress.

Name:

Address:

APPENDIX 2

SUMMARY OF THE QUESTIONNAIRE RESPONSES

Questionnaires were handed out at the Festival at the Lake, June 3, 4 and 5, 1988. A total of 26 questionnaires were analyzed by the CAT Team in October, 1988. An additional 16 questionnaires received between July 26 and November 28, 1988 were not reviewed by the CAT Team. Of these, some were distributed to the Adams Point Preservation Society for a garage sale fundraiser on July 24, 1988 (subsequent to the Festival at the Lake) at the specific request of the Society. Many of the public responses to the questionnaire involved suggestions very similar to those proposed by the CAT Team at the public workshops held several months later, in spring of 1989. Following is a summary of the responses, by category:

Summary of Questionnaire Responses: Answers to specific questions

A. Question: How do you get there (to Lake Merritt)?

Area/Activity	Number of Responses	Frequency
1. Walk	16	
2. Bicycle	3	
3. Drive	5	
4. BART	1	
Total Responses	25	

B. Question: What do you usually do and where do you go?
When or How often?

1. Jogging	2	2-3 x/week
2. Birdwatching/feeding	8	1-2 x/month
3. Take photographs	1	
4. Sitting	2	
5. Attend Garden Center	4	1 x/week
6. Attend Camron/Stanford House	3	
7. Walking	11	1-2 x/week
8. Playground activity	2	1-2 x/month
9. Attend Children's Fairyland	3	
10. Commute walking	2	5 x/week
11. Attend band concert	3	
12. Attend Festival at the Lake	3	
13. Lawn bowling	1	
14. Bicycling	4	1-2 x/week
15. Boating (from Boathouse)	3	
16. Attend restaurant	2	
17. Attend Science Center	1	
18. Use park area	1	
19. Picnicking	1	
Total Responses:	57	

- C. Question: Positive aspects of the Lake (in response to the question. How do you generally feel about the Lake, its environment and its facilities?)

Area/Activity	Number of Responses
1. Park	1
2. Boating	2
3. Wildlife/bird refuge	6
4. Value as urban open space	8
5. Views to city	4
6. Science Center activities	1
7. Garden Center and activities	3
8. Necklace of Lights	8
9. Walk around Lake	1
10. Sunday band concerts	1
11. Small Botanical Gardens	4
12. Landscaping in general	3
13. Naturalistic areas on Grand near Children's Fairyland	1
14. Variety of users	1
15. Bandstand at night from afar	1
16. Lawn Bowling Courts	2
17. The Embarcadero (?)	1
18. Camron/Stanford House	1
19. Lake itself	1
20. Lack of fast food commercialization	1
21. Restrictions on dogs and alcohol	1
Total Responses:	52

- D. Question: Negative aspects of the Lake (In response to the question, "How do you generally feel about the Lake, its environment and its facilities?")

Area/Activity	Number of Responses
1. Litter in lake	18
2. Poor quality landscaping and maintenance	3
3. Security and safety at night	4
4. Narrow park edge between Lake and traffic	3
5. Imposing expressway between 12th and 14th Streets	3
6. Stench at 3 arms on ends of Lake	13
7. Drug dealers and cruisers on Lakeshore Avenue	1
8. Proposed 30-story building at Grand and Harrison	1
9. Excessive parking adjacent to Adam's Point Boathouse	1
10. Neglected 14th Street beach area	3
11. Inadequate bike lane/shoulder at 12th Street bridge	3
12. Rough surface for bicyclists	1
13. Shoddy Rotary Science exhibits	2
14. Lakeshore Avenue parking is a bike hazard and visual eyesore	1
15. Lack of connection to Kaiser Convention Center	1
16. Lack of eateries near Lake	1
17. Loud radios	2
18. Poor water quality	3

- | | |
|--|---|
| 19. Lakeshore Avenue
between 18th Street
and E. 14th Street
is barren, dirty and
threatening | 1 |
| 20. Potholes in jogging
paths | 1 |
| 21. Day glow colors of
Children's Fairyland
sign | 1 |

Total Responses:	67
------------------	----

E. Question: What would you like to see improved?

Area/Activity	Number of Responses
---------------	---------------------

Litter/Water Quality

1. Keep water level higher than current level	5
2. Skim refuge from Lake surface regularly	3
3. More litter receptacles needed	3
4. Chain down litter receptacles	1
5. Empty litter receptacles more often	1
6. Intensify litter campaign, with more signs, fines for littering or clean-up duty for litters	5
7. Clean out pedestrian underpasses	2
8. Restore Glen Echo Creek area where it enters lake	1

Total Responses:	21
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Circulation

1. Improve 12th Street Expressway area to be safer and less imposing for pedestrians/cyclists	4
2. Create separated biking/ pedestrian paths	5
3. Limit addition of more bikeways/paths	1
4. Improve traffic conditions for bicyclists	1
5. Reduce parking in Park and around Lake	3
6. Provide parking on lots near the Lake	1

- | | |
|---|---|
| 7. Install distance markers
on path around the Lake | 1 |
| 8. Weekend shuttle bus
service around Lake,
with connections to
BART, Museum, Jack
London Square, etc | 3 |

Total Responses:	19
------------------	----

Connections/Links

- | | |
|---|---|
| 1. Incorporate Estuary
channel area into
Lake, with open
space and pedestrian/
bike paths | 2 |
| 2. Connect Lake more
strongly with Kaiser
Convention Center,
Jack London Square, etc. | 3 |
| 3. Provide street level
access from Kaiser
Convention Center to
Lake | 1 |
| 4. Maintain views from
Lake out to City/Hills | 1 |

Total Responses:	7
------------------	---

Design/Landscaping/Environment

- | | |
|---|----|
| 1. More sculpture at
park/urban nodes | 2 |
| 2. Limit development
(building heights and
density) | 6 |
| 3. Improve 12th Street
beach area | 2 |
| 4. Enhance north arm area | 1 |
| 5. Implement tree planting
program | 14 |
| -Lakeshore Avenue between
E. 18th and Brooklyn | 2 |
| -Lakeside Drive | 2 |
| -Harrison to Grand | 2 |
| -with brass plaques for
donated trees | 2 |

- | | |
|--|---|
| 6. Implement more interesting plantings: | 1 |
| -diverse plantings around Fairyland | |
| -creative year-round beds at Garden Center | |
| -regional flavor with native trees | |
| -natives near existing oak groves | |
| -"Victorian" plants at Stanford-Cameron House | |
| -seasonal flowers in greater abundance | |
| 7. Allow more natural, less pruned effect | 1 |
| 8. Improve landscaping and maintenance | 4 |
| 9. Enlist volunteer workers to plant, maintain, clean parkland strip | 4 |

Total Responses:	43
------------------	----

Park Structures/Elements

- | | |
|---|---|
| 1. Larger children's playground/create additional play area | 2 |
| 2. More restroom facilities | 1 |
| 3. More drinking fountains | 1 |
| 4. More benches | 2 |
| 5. More picnic tables | 1 |
| 6. Install spotting scope to view birds; wildlife refuge area | 1 |
| 7. Install new exhibits and Rotary Science Center | 2 |
| 8. Remove bird cages | 1 |
| 9. Rehabilitate duck feeding area | 2 |
| 10. Rehabilitate Children's Fairyland | 1 |
| 11. Rehabilitate boathouse | 1 |
| 12. Rehabilitate/clean-up Lakeside Park fountain | 1 |
| 13. Give historic status to appropriate buildings | 1 |

- | | |
|---|---|
| 14. Renovate or else
remove fishing piers | 1 |
| 15. Improve boat landing
area at E. 18th St. | 1 |
| 16. Replace paddle wheel
boat with Sacramento
riverboat as a
restaurant/history
room | 1 |
| 17. Style of benches and
trash bins should
match light poles
should be of the
historical period | 1 |

Total Responses:	21
------------------	----

Use of Lake and Park

- | | |
|--|---|
| 1. Have mounted police
patrol on regular
basis | 3 |
| 2. Allow dogs on leash | 2 |
| 3. More bank concerts | 2 |
| 4. Encourage greater range
of evening activities,
ie: theater, dance,
restaurant hours,
concerts | 2 |
| 5. Improve security | 2 |
| 6. Encourage food and
flower vendors | 1 |
| 7. Have 4th of July
fireworks display | 2 |
| 8. Ban fireworks display | 1 |
| 9. Curtail expansion of
Childrens' Fairyland | 1 |
| 10. Make lake a fishery | 1 |
| 11. Do not allow additional
facilities in park | 2 |
| 12. Install events kiosk/
board at park
entrance | 1 |
| 13. Discontinue annual
motorboat races | 1 |

14. Reduce current amount of activities in park	1
15. Build international type coffee/tea house at Garden Center (outdoors)	1
Total Responses:	23

APPENDIX 3: BIBLIOGRAPHY

City of Oakland, Office of Public Works: Lake Merritt Management Plan, 1987

City of Oakland: Strategic Plan for Cultural Development, June 24, 1988

City of Oakland: Oakland Central District Development Program, 1986

City of Oakland: Oakland Policy Plan, 1972
(amended through September, 1980)

City of Oakland: 1966 Plan

Miller, Cheryl. U.C. Berkeley Graduate Thesis, "Identifying, Evaluating and Managing a Historic Landscape: A Case Study of Lake Merritt Park"

Alameda County Flood Control and Water Conservation District:
"Preliminary Design Study: Lake Merritt Flood Control Facilities," February 1966

Alameda County Flood Control and Water Conservation District:
Annual and interim reports of Lake Merritt monitoring study prepared by the firm of Engineering Sciences of Berkeley, CA

Hoffman, Roderick W. and Shawley, Gary W.: Lake Merritt Restoration Project, January, 1982

APPENDIX 4: LETTERS OF SUPPORT

TITO PATRI & ASSOCIATES

LANDSCAPE ARCHITECTURE

1620 MONTGOMERY

SAN FRANCISCO • CA 94111

TEL: 415 • 986 • 8811

March 22, 1988

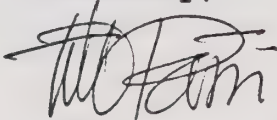
Mr. Brooks Kolb, Chairman
Lake Merritt "CAT" Project
377 Santa Clara #106
Oakland, CA 94610

Dear Brooks,

My involvement as Chairman of the Consultant Committee of the San Francisco Presidio Community Assistance Team Project (1986) was most gratifying. Not only did this study produce a series of current resource inventory maps for the Presidio, but it initiated a constructive dialogue between the U.S. Army, the GGNRA, the City of San Francisco and several local neighborhood groups regarding the uses of the many diverse land units within the Presidio. I was proud to be able to donate my professional landscape architectural and planning services to all of the organizations that have a primary stake in the future of the Presidio.

Consequently, I was pleased to learn that you are planning another CAT project---for Oakland's Lake Merritt. We, as members of the Northern California Chapter, American Society of Landscape Architects, are taking a strong lead nationally in donating our professional skills to the community. Best wishes in the successful implementation of the Lake Merritt CAT Project. If anyone you contact regarding the project has questions or concerns regarding the ASLA's community assistance team program, I would be happy to respond as best I can. Please keep me in touch with the project as it progresses.

Sincerely,



Tito Patri, FASLA
Principal, Tito Patri & Associates



**City and County of San Francisco
Department of City Planning**

**450 McAllister Street
San Francisco, CA 94102**

ADMINISTRATION

(415) 558-6414 / 558-6411

CITY PLANNING COMMISSION

(415) 558-6414

PLANS AND PROGRAMS

(415) 558-8264

IMPLEMENTATION / ZONING

(415) 558-6377

1538

1538

Design

Mr. Brooks Kolb
Chairman, Lake Merritt "CAT" Project
Michael Painter & Associates
562 Mission Street
San Francisco, CA 94105

March 25, 1988

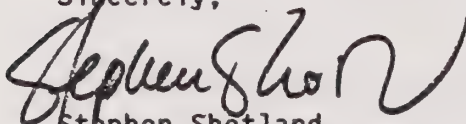
Dear Mr. Kolb:

In 1986, the ASLA sponsored the Presidio "CAT" project in San Francisco. The Presidio CAT provided a great contribution to the City of San Francisco, as well as to the U.S. Army, the Golden Gate National Recreation Area, and other groups interested in the future of the Presidio. As a the Department of City Planning's representative to the project, I can assert that the ASLA provided a great service by opening up a dialogue between the groups which have an interest in the Presidio. The CAT project also provided a valuable planning study which the Department was not in the position to undertake.

Given the result of the Presidio CAT Project, I was pleased to learn that the Northern California Chapter of the American Society of Landscape Architects, ASLA, is sponsoring a "CAT" project to plan for the enhancement of Lake Merritt as a significant open space amenity for the City of Oakland.

If I can be of any assistance to you, please free to call. Wishing you the best of luck with the Lake Merritt "CAT" Project.

Sincerely,


Stephen Shotland
Planner

SS:292



ASLA

April 27, 1988

Mr. Brooks Kolb
Chairman, Lake Merritt "CAT" Project
377 Santa Clara #106
Oakland, CA 94610

CHERYL L. BARTON, ASLA
PRESIDENT

AMERICAN
SOCIETY OF
LANDSCAPE
ARCHITECTS
1733 CONNECTICUT
AVENUE N.W.
WASHINGTON, D.C.
20009
202 466-7730


Dear Mr. Kolb:

I am pleased to learn that you are undertaking an ASLA Community Assistance Team project to investigate ways to improve the effectiveness of Lake Merritt as a major central public park for the City of Oakland. I understand that the end product of this process will be a schematic master plan and a set of design guidelines for implementing the master plan. Congratulations on the Oakland City Council's recent endorsement of this project.

It is gratifying that the ASLA's Community Assistance Team or "CAT" program has expanded beyond its original goal of leaving each city hosting our annual national meeting with a free contribution of our design and planning skills directed toward resolving a particular open space issue in that city. Your Lake Merritt project, together with several CAT projects in other states, will ensure that cities across the nation will receive the benefit of our particular expertise as landscape architects. As you know, the "CAT" program is consistent with the ASLA's mission to serve and inform the public in achieving quality in the natural and built environments.

On behalf of the national ASLA organization, I heartily endorse the Lake Merritt CAT Project.

Sincerely yours,



Cheryl Barton, ASLA
President

7s102:brooks kolb

MAR 14 1989

MPA Design

Amphion
Environmental, Inc.

Professional Design Services

13 March 1989

Mr. Brooks Kolb
Michael Painter Associates
562 Mission Street, 6th Floor
San Francisco, California 94105

Dear Books:

Thank you for your timely and interesting presentation of the Lake Merritt C.A.T. Study to our O.D.A. meeting in December. We were impressed with the extent of the analysis, although your study is preliminary. It is especially useful to view the Lake Merritt area, the Estuary, and even the link to Jack London's Waterfront, conceptually as a whole. The design and planning opportunities for the City are very many and important when seen from this viewpoint.

Our members were also interested in your ideas to make the most of adjacent land and visually available green spaces on the Lake's edges. Building an over-the freeway park linking the lake to the Kaiser Convention Center or Oakland Museum would certainly be an idea worth exploring. But the simpler, easier to implement ideas which could intensify recreational uses and maintain or enhance the beauty of the Lake impressed us even more.

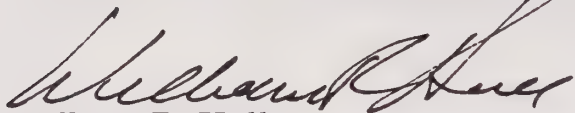
Among those we especially enjoyed were the bicycle and walking/running path networks, the restoration of the Bird Sanctuary to a more natural environment and the concept of a higher, cleaner water level, perhaps in conjunction with a significant and well-focused water feature. Signage or other visual identification can be designed to make all these water-related areas a whole in the public's imagination, just as the Necklace of Lights has enhanced recognition of the lake.

Given to the scale of the lake, we were concerned only about the concept of filling any lake edges to gain landscape space. (Any other available options should take precedence; an overall study of traffic patterns and lane use may result in solutions preferable to landlife.

We hope to see your coherent ideas receive recognition and more formal planning study in the future. Thanks to you and your team again for a fine preliminary study.

Yours truly,

AMPHION ENVIRONMENTAL, INC.



William R. Hull
Member of Oakland Design Advocates

WRH/ds



COMMITTEES
CHAIRMAN
JOINT LEGISLATIVE
AUDIT COMMITTEE

HEALTH
JUDICIARY
PUBLIC SAFETY
TRANSPORTATION
WAYS AND MEANS

ASSEMBLY CALIFORNIA LEGISLATURE

ELIHU M. HARRIS

ASSEMBLYMAN, THIRTEENTH DISTRICT

CHAIRMAN

JOINT LEGISLATIVE AUDIT COMMITTEE

DISTRICT OFFICE

1111 JACKSON STREET
SUITE 5027

OAKLAND, CALIFORNIA 94607
(415) 464-0339

SACRAMENTO ADDRESS

STATE CAPITOL

P.O. BOX 942849

SACRAMENTO, CALIFORNIA
94249-0001

(916) 445-7442

June 5, 1989

Honorable Members,
Oakland City Council
405 14th Street
Oakland, CA 94612

Dear Councilmembers:

It is my pleasure to write on behalf of the Lake Merritt Community Assistance Team (CAT), sponsored by the American Society of Landscape Architects (ASLA). The Northern California Chapter of ASLA is sponsoring a CAT project to enhance Lake Merritt as a significant open space amenity for the City of Oakland.

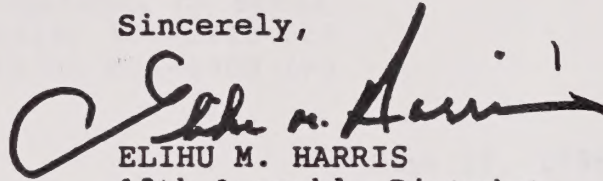
As you know, the purpose of this project is "to catalyze a larger planning process which can lead to designed solutions to the many opportunities for enhancing, improving or restoring the environment of the Lake Merritt Study Area".

In particular the CAT project has identified several opportunities and suggested design options for increasing the beauty and public use of the Lake. Among these are bicycle and walking/running path networks, the restoration of the Bird Sanctuary to a more natural environment, the concept of a higher, cleaner water level, as well as expanding the types and variety of recreation available to all ages of the public.

In addition to seeking neighborhood response to the potential design options presented, the CAT Team is seeking to have the City of Oakland review the opportunities and analyze the feasibility of the potential design responses.

I would respectfully submit that the ASLA has a proven record in this area and hope that you will consider their project favorably and establish a formal planning study of their proposals for enhancing public recognition and use of Lake Merritt.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in dark ink, appearing to read "Elihu M. Harris". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a long horizontal stroke extending to the right.

ELIHU M. HARRIS
13th Assembly District

EMH:tb

I would respectfully request that the above be a written report
in three parts and hope that you will send me three copies
of each part and enclose a check for the amount of \$100.00
for the above mentioned report and for the above mentioned
for the above mentioned report and for the above mentioned

Very truly,
Yours,
[Signature]
[Name]
[Address]

Very truly,
Yours,

Very truly,
Yours,

Very truly,
Yours,

Very truly,
Yours,

Very truly,
Yours,

Very truly,
Yours,

JOHN A. RUSSO
770 Kingston Avenue #104
Oakland, CA 94611
(415) 547-2917 (h)
(415) 444-6800 (w)

June 19, 1989

Mr. Brooks Kolb, Chairman
Lake Merritt Community Design Team
377 Santa Clara Avenue, #106
Oakland, CA 94610

RE: COMPREHENSIVE PROPOSALS TO IMPROVE LAKE MERRITT

Dear Mr. Kolb:

It was a pleasure meeting with you on May 21, 1989, at your presentation regarding the future of Lake Merritt which took place at Lakeside Park.

On my own behalf, and on behalf of the citizens of Oakland, I want to thank you and your committee for your fine efforts to improve the Lake and to involve citizens in an intelligent discussion about the Lake's future. This light show was clearly the product of many hours of hard work and careful compromise: It is an impressive presentation.

However, I want to express not only my gratitude, but my wholehearted support for your efforts. Although I may not agree with each and every proposal which your group is putting forward with respect to Lake Merritt and the Lake's park and estuary system, I am in full agreement with your group's general direction. If I can be of any assistance, please do not hesitate to contact me.

Good luck with all of your efforts to preserve and improve our urban jewel, Lake Merritt.

Very truly yours,


JOHN A. RUSSO

JAR:ks

147



0124903975

John A. Smith
The National Wildlife Federation
Washington, D.C. 20004
(202) 842-1000
(202) 842-1000

June 15, 1982

Mr. Richard L. Smith
Lake Mead National Recreation Area
177 South Main Street, Suite 100
Salt Lake City, Utah 84101

Re: CONGRESSIONAL MEMORIAL TO PRESERVE LAKE MEAD

Dear Mr. Smith:

I am a pleasure meeting with you on May 11, 1982, at your headquarters regarding the future of Lake Mead which is located in Nevada.

On that date, and on behalf of the citizens of Nevada, I would like to thank you and your committee for your fine efforts to preserve the lake and its historic significance. It is a pleasure to meet with you and your committee on this important issue. I am sure that your committee is doing a great job of representing the people of Nevada.

However, I want to express not only my appreciation for the efforts of your committee, but also my appreciation for the efforts of the people of Nevada who are working to preserve the lake. I am sure that your committee is doing a great job of representing the people of Nevada.

I am sure that your committee is doing a great job of representing the people of Nevada. I am sure that your committee is doing a great job of representing the people of Nevada.

Very truly yours,

John A. Smith